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ONE LANGUAGE, TWO SCRIPTS

The Hindi Movement
in Nineteenth Century
North India

CHRISTOPHER R. KING

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Preface

I owe thanks to many people over the years for helping me with the learning, research and writing that eventually led to this book. For my formal academic training in Hindi and Urdu I am indebted to: Dr Manindra Verma, Dr Usha Nilsson and Dr G. C. Narang at the University of Wisconsin; Dr Bruce Pray at the University of California, Berkeley; and Dr K. K. Mishra and Dr H. C. Nayyar at Banaras Hindu University. For my less formal but equally valuable language learning I must thank: the students of Birla Hostel at Banaras Hindu University during 1966–67 for patiently listening to my initially halting attempts to speak Hindi and furnishing me with many hours of conversation; many Indian friends and acquaintances who provided me with practice; Shri Kailash Nath Chaube who became not just my Hindi tutor but also a good friend; and especially the many people of India whose pleasure in my attempts to communicate with them sustained my efforts. Thanks to these many teachers all translations in this book, including any mistakes, are my own.

I am also grateful to many other people and institutions who helped me in a variety of ways: the Fulbright Foundation for giving me a year in Banaras to learn Hindi and Urdu; the Foreign Area Fellowship Program, and especially my interviewer Barney Cohn, for supporting my dissertation research in the United States, England, and India; the India Office Library for countless hours of research in comfortable surroundings, and especially Alf and Fred; the University of Windsor for a sabbatical year in India; Frank Conlon, Chris Bayly, and several others who helped guide me in the mysteries of finding materials in the IOL; the Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras and its Pradhan Mantri Shri Sudhakar Pandey for providing a treasure house of information, and especially the late Shri Sadanand Shastri and Shambhunath Vajpeyi whose memories I cherish; my dissertation adviser and well-wisher at the University of Wisconsin, Bob Frykenberg; Jim Nye of the University of Chicago and Jerry Barrier of the University of Missouri; my research assistants Shri Ibadur Rahman Ansari and Shri Vidya Nath Chaube, my frequent host Shri Chandra Prakash, and my several informants, especially the late Shri Ray Krishna Das, all of Banaras; and my publishers, Oxford University Press, India. To Leela, my wife, my gratitude beyond measure.

I have long thought that each book which purports to describe and analyse complex human affairs should include a 'statement of bias' or perhaps better, a 'statement of perspective' from the author so that readers can know something of the values and attitudes that lie behind the often impersonal-seeming text. I have done this to some extent in Chapter I, and to a greater extent in Chapter VI, but something more personal seems appropriate here. Very briefly, I value Hindi and Urdu equally, but have more acquaintance with and more facility in the former. I have a strong distaste for extremists on either side of an artificially created linguistic divide. I cannot but feel that such extremism rests on a basic intolerance of differences, whether they are linguistic or religious, which threatens to destroy the unity in diversity which is India at its best. Let me say with Kabir that:

For Muslims in mosques and for Hindus in temples
both Khuda and Ram are there;
Where mosque and temple do not exist
who is it that rules supreme there?

Windsor, Ontario
December 1993

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Chronology

- 1775 Banaras area ceded to British
- 1792 Benares Sanskrit College founded
- 1800 College of Fort William founded
- 1832 English and vernaculars replace Persian in Presidencies of Bombay and Madras
- 1835 Shore establishes Nagari in Saugor and Nerbudda Territories
- 1837 English and vernaculars replace Persian in Bengal Presidency
- 1839 Petitions against replacement of Persian
- 1845 Survey of indigenous schools in the NWP
- 1847 Dr Ballantyne attempts to improve the Hindi of his Benares Sanskrit College students
- 1852 Board of Revenue of NWP orders Nagari, not Kaithi, for village papers
- 1865 Anjuman-i-Punjab founded
- 1867 British Indian Association of the NWP petitions for Vernacular University
- 1868 Shiva Prasad writes Memorandum against Urdu
- 1872 Use of Nagari script authorized in Central Provinces
- 1873 Hindi and Nagari supporters in NWP present memorial to provincial government
- 1875 Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College of Aligarh founded, uses Urdu as medium of instruction
- 1875 Arya Samaj founded, helps to promote Hindi in north India
- 1877 Government of NWP&O prescribes Middle Class Vernacular and Anglo-Vernacular Examinations for government service, and recognizes Urdu as the superior vernacular language
- 1880 Nagari and Kaithi made official scripts in Bihar
- 1882 Hunter Commission serves as focus of linguistic controversy
- 1882 Memorial of National Muhammadan Association of Calcutta
- 1887 Khari Boli vs. Braj Bhasha controversy begins
- 1893 Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras founded
- 1897 Malaviya publishes *Court Character and Primary Education*
- 1898 Central Hindu College of Banaras founded, includes Hindi in curriculum
- 1898 Delegation of prominent Hindus meets with Lieutenant-Governor of NWP, MacDonnell, to plead for Hindi and Nagari

- 1900 NWP&O Resolution gives Nagari equal status with Urdu script
- 1900 Urdu Defence Association of Allahabad publishes *A Defence of the Urdu Language and Character*
- 1903 Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu founded
- 1910 Hindi Sahitya Sammelan founded
- 1913 UP Committee on Primary Education debates question of proper language for primary readers
- 1921 Indian National Congress accepts principle of linguistic provinces
- 1923 Hindi and Urdu become regular degree courses in UP universities
- 1925 Gandhi persuades Congress to accept Hindustani as official language
- 1947 Uttar Pradesh adopts Hindi in Devanagari as official state language
- 1948 Linguistic Provinces Commission report
- 1950 Constitution of India provides that Hindi become official language in 1965
- 1952 Creation of linguistic state of Andhra Pradesh
- 1955 Report of States Reorganization Commission
- 1965 Official Languages Act gives Hindi status of official language and English status as additional official language
- 1968 Official Languages (Amendment) Act strengthens status of English
- 1989 Urdu becomes additional official language of Uttar Pradesh

Transliteration Scheme

For Urdu words, I have used for the most part the system of G. C. Narang in *Urdu: Readings in Literary Urdu Prose* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968). For Hindi words I have used the system of Rupert Snell and Simon Weightman in *Teach Yourself Hindi* (London: Random House, 1989). Where places, personal names, and terms have a commonly-used English spelling (e.g., Varanasi, Shyam Sundar Das, and Nagari) I have not used diacriticals.

SAMPLES OF THE NAGARI AND URDU SCRIPTS

२

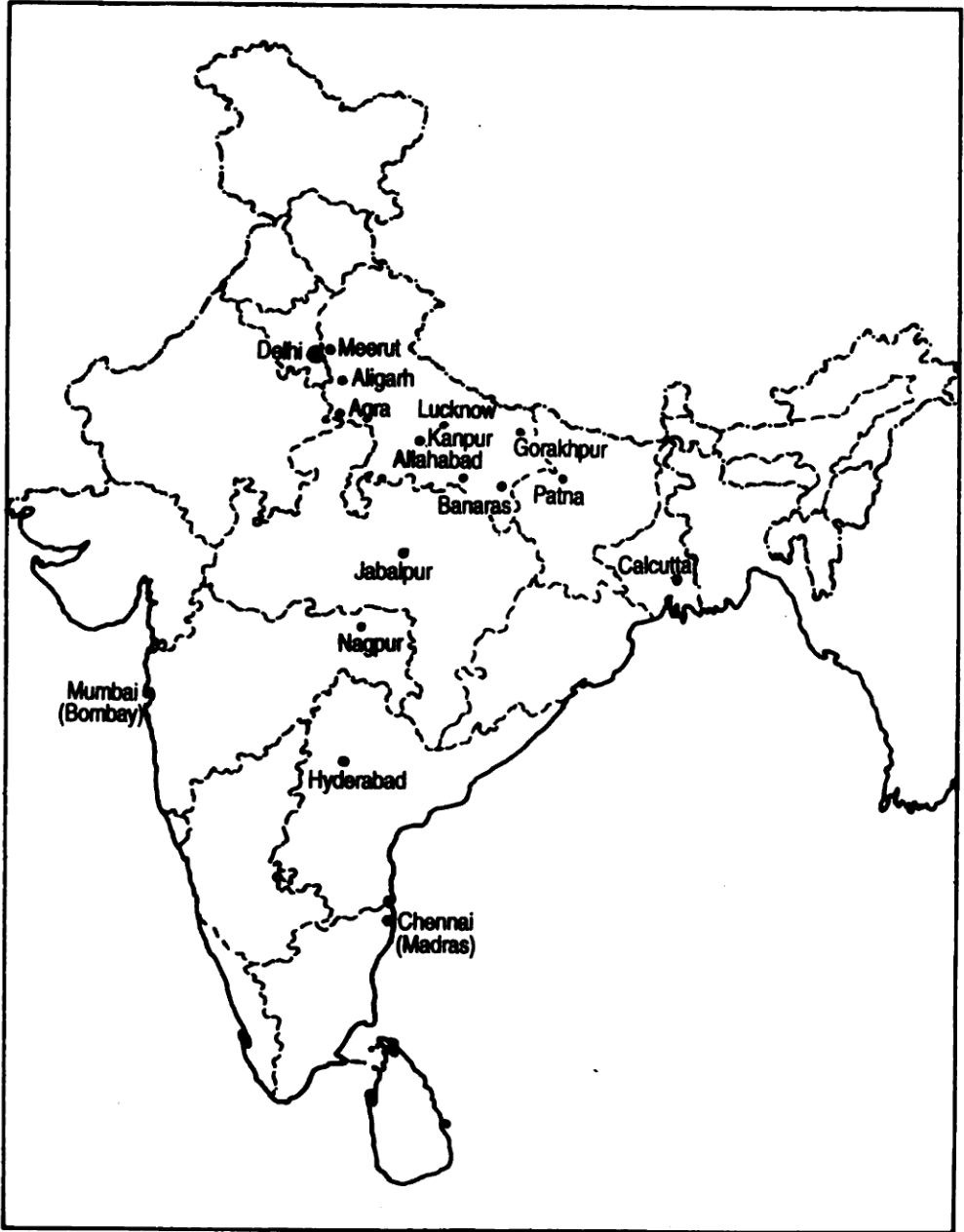
महाशय दीनदयाल प्रयाग के एक छोटे से गाँव में रहते थे। वह किसान न थे पर खेती करते थे। वह जमींदार न थे पर जमींदारी करते थे। धानेदार न थे पर धानेदारी करते थे। वह थे जमींदार के मुस्तार। गाँव पर उन्हीं की धाक थी। उनके पास चार चपरासी थे, एक घोड़ा, कई गायें-भैंसें। वेतन कुल पाँच रुपये पाते थे, जो उनके तम्बाकू के खर्च को भी काफी न होता था। उनकी आय के और कौन से मार्ग थे, यह कौन जानता है! जालपा उन्हीं की लड़की थी। पहले उसके तीन भाई और थे; पर इस समय वह अकेली थी। उससे कोई पूछता—तेरे भाई क्या हुए, तो वह बड़ी सरलता से कहती—बड़ी दूर खेलने गये हैं! कहते हैं, मुस्तार साहब ने एक गरीब आदमी को इतना पिटाया था कि वह मर गया था। उसके तीन वर्ष के अन्दर तीनों लड़के जाते रहे। तब से बेचारे बहुत सँभलकर चलते थे। फूँक-फूँककर पाँव रखते; दूध के जल थे, छाँछ भी फूँक-फूँककर पीते थे। माता-पिता के जीवन में और क्या अवलम्ब!

(From *Gabas* by Prem Chand, Allahabad: Hans Prakashan, 1964, p. 2, Ch. 2, paragraph 1)

دو

منشی دین دیال آباد کے ایک چھوٹے سے گاؤں میں رہتے تھے۔ وہ کسان نہ تھے۔ مگر کھیتی کرتے تھے۔ زمیندار نہ تھے۔ مگر زمینداری کرتے تھے۔ تھانیدار نہ تھے۔ مگر تھانیداری کرتے تھے۔ وہ زمیندار کے مختار تھے۔ گاؤں میں ان کی دھاک تھی، ان کے پاس چار چیراسی تھے۔ ایک گھوڑا، کئی گائیں اور بھینسیں۔ ننخواہ کل پانچ روپے تھی جو ان کے تمباکو کے خرچ کو بھی کافی نہ ہوتی تھی۔ مگر اس میں کچھ ایسی برکت تھی کہ ریسانہ زندگی بسر کرتے تھے۔ جاتا تھا انہیں کی لڑکی تھی۔ پہلے اس کے تین بھائی اور تھے، مگر اس وقت وہ اکیلی تھی۔ اس سے کوئی پوچھتا، تیرے بھائی کیا ہوئے؟ تو وہ بڑی سادگی سے کہتی۔ بڑی دور کھیلنے گئے ہیں۔ کہتے ہیں، مختار صاحب نے ایک غریب کسان کو اتنا پیٹ لیا تھا کہ وہ ایک ہفتے کے اندر مر گیا اور سال کے اندر منشی جی کے مینوں لڑکے جاتے رہے تب سے یہاں بہت سنبھل کر چلتے تھے۔ اب یہی لڑکی ماں باپ کی زندگی کا سہارا تھی۔

(From *Gabas* by Prem Chand, New Delhi: Diamond Pocket Books, n.d., p. 6, Ch. 2, paragraph 1)



Places mentioned in the text

CHAPTER I

Introduction

We do not clearly understand what you Europeans mean by the term Hindi, for there are hundreds of dialects, all in our opinion equally entitled to the name, and there is here no standard as there is in Sanskrit.¹

The Hindi movement in nineteenth century north India provides an interesting and extremely complex example of the relationships between language, religion, and nationalism. No scholar of modern Indian history would dispute the assertion that language and religion have had an enormous influence on the development of nationalism in South Asia. The creation of Pakistan in 1947, the inauguration of linguistic states in India in 1955, the anti-Hindi agitation in South India in 1965, the emergence of a Punjabi Suba in 1966, the independence of Bangladesh in 1971—these and many other similar events testify to the great importance of these two symbols in recent times. To understand the contemporary manifestations of language and religion, however, one needs to study their earlier expressions by those Indians who used them as the central symbols of competing nationalisms. The Hindi movement of the nineteenth century, copiously documented but little studied outside India, furnishes an excellent opportunity to examine an important aspect of the development of Hindu nationalism in north India.

Theoretical Background

Many scholars have exercised their ingenuity in attempts to create a satisfactory conceptual framework for the pervasive phenomenon of nationalism. One of the most instructive of these attempts appears in the writings of Karl Deutsch, especially his *Nationalism and Social Communication*, where he sets forth the idea of a 'people' as a large group characterized by a complementarity of social communication. This complementarity means that members of the group can communicate more effectively over a wider range of subjects with each other than with outsiders. A people struggling to gain control over the behavior of its members becomes a 'nationality' which in turn becomes a 'nation' once this control has been added to the previously existing cohesiveness and shared symbols.²

2 *One Language, Two Scripts*

Deutsch offers a number of analytical concepts to determine whether widely diverging cultural and linguistic traditions within a single political framework will result in the formation of one or more than one nationality or nation. 'Social mobilization', a process of change occurring in areas undergoing modernization, brings increasing numbers of the more isolated portions of the population into an ever denser 'net of social communication'. This 'mobilized population' includes literates, newspaper readers, people residing in cities and towns, people in non-agricultural occupations, and others. 'Assimilation', another process of change, brings different peoples within the same political system into the same network of social communication, while the opposite process, 'differentiation', separates peoples into different networks. When the rate of social mobilization outstrips that of assimilation, differentiation results; when the rate of assimilation keeps ahead of that of social mobilization, the former proceeds apace. Various features hasten or retard the process of assimilation: the different rates at which different peoples are mobilized, the proportion of the population which is assimilated into this or that cultural tradition, the degree of similarity of linguistic and cultural habits, the frequency of contacts between different peoples, and the scale of material rewards for assimilation.³

The general nature of these concepts makes them applicable to a wide range of historical cases, but only a few scholars have attempted to apply them systematically to the development of nationalism in India, where extraordinary cultural and linguistic diversity occurs within a single political system. The most thorough-going attempt to date is Paul Brass's *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*, in which the author applies Deutsch's theories to three cases. In the first of these he deals with the Maithili language movement of northern Bihar, in the second and third with the more complex issues of Urdu and the Muslim community in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and of Punjabi and the Sikh and Hindu communities in the Punjab. Discussion of the Hindi movement occurs throughout the work as a necessary counterpoint to the other three movements.⁴

While Brass accepts the basic approach of Deutsch, he makes a number of additions and modifications. Since his theoretical framework provides the analytical basis of this study, we will examine it with some care. Like Deutsch, he posits three levels of groups, an 'ethnic group', a 'community', and a 'nation' or 'nationality'. The first term, defined as any group of individuals with some objective characteristics in common, also refers to groups whose members do not necessarily give any

subjective importance to their objective distinctness. The second term refers to an ethnic group whose members have developed an awareness of their common identity and seek to define group boundaries. The third term refers to a community which makes political demands with a significant degree of success. The focus of Brass's work lies in the relationships between these three levels of groups: how do objective differences among ethnic groups become transformed into the subjective awareness of communities, and then into 'symbolic referents for political demands'? In short, how do ethnic groups change into communities, and then into nationalities?⁶

Brass seeks the answer to this fundamental question through four 'categories' of questions. The first deals with the importance of objective differences between ethnic groups. Language and religion, two of the most important 'objective' criteria, themselves show great variation. Moreover, neither is 'given' since either can be altered for political purposes. Of the two, religion has proved a more important 'line of cleavage' in north India than language. The second category concerns internal values and internal processes of change in groups. Here the author emphasizes the construction of myths of 'internal value creation', and the role of elites as that segment of a group which takes the lead in attaching value to symbols of group identity. The third category has to do with inter-group relations. Brass asserts that the perception of uneven rates of social change between different groups stimulates the development of group consciousness. Hence the existence of another different or potentially different group is essential. He adds two modifications to Deutsch's fundamental theory: first, for assimilation to proceed, there must be not just the capacity to communicate but also the willingness, and second, political organization and government policy often play decisive roles in shaping inter-group relations and group consciousness. The fourth and final category relates to political action. Here we learn that elite consciousness precedes mass consciousness and that political organization bridges the gap between the two. Political leaders and parties have an independent role in shaping the social environment.⁷

Brass emphasizes three major themes which he combines into the central argument of his book. First, objective characteristics or 'givens' such as language or religion are *not* givens and can be altered. Second, political elites choose one symbol as primary and strive to bring other symbols into line. This process, which the author labels 'multi-symbol congruence', is the book's central concept. Finally, political organizations

4 *One Language, Two Scripts*

do not merely reflect or transmit group consciousness, they also shape it by the deliberate manipulation of symbols. Ethnic groups change into communities and then into nationalities through the efforts of political elites who choose a decisive cultural symbol and manoeuvre other symbols into congruence. Political conflict can induce cleavages as well as reflect them, and objective characteristics can be changed during this process. In north India, Brass argues, political elites have selected religion as the primary symbol and have exerted themselves to make language and other symbols congruent.⁸

Two stages mark this process of transformation. In the first, ethnic groups become subjectively conscious communities. An elite takes the lead, attaches value to certain objective characteristics, defines group boundaries, creates and communicates a myth, especially to the socially mobilizing elements of the group. This stage requires four essential components: the elite, the socially mobilizing population, another group or groups from whom the first can be differentiated, and a 'pool of symbols' suitable for differentiation. In the second stage, communities become nationalities through articulating and acquiring political rights for themselves. Although political demands can be made and even conceded before a group becomes cohesive, 'the only proof of the existence of a nationality is the achievement and maintenance of group rights through political activity and political achievement'.⁹

Historical Background

Few nations present a spectacle of greater linguistic diversity than India. To those only casually acquainted with her, modern India must seem a veritable jungle of languages, and authoritative sources reinforce this impression. The massive *Linguistic Survey of India* listed 179 languages, the 1921 Census of India showed 188, and the distinguished Indian linguist, S. K. Chatterji rounded the figure off to 180.¹⁰ If one looks more closely, however, these apparently overwhelming numbers shrink to manageable proportions. The really significant languages are about a dozen and include the vast majority of India's population. The four major languages of the Dravidian language family of South India—Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam—along with the eight major languages of the Indo-European family of north India—Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Oriya, Punjabi, and Assamese—accounted for 93 per cent of the 1981 population of India.¹¹ From this perspective India's linguistic diversity seems not particularly remarkable for a continent-sized nation; Europe west of Russia, roughly comparable in

size and population, includes more than twenty different nations using more than twenty major languages.

This comparison draws attention to a remarkable fact. Faced with continental-scale language problems, India has adopted an unusual solution. Unlike most other modern nations, she has chosen to draw many of her internal political boundaries on the basis of language. Of the more than twenty states included in the Republic of India in 1990, ten comprising approximately 55 per cent of the 1991 population acquired their present borders for mainly linguistic reasons.¹² The great majority of the population in each of these states speaks one language, and in most cases the majority of the speakers of that language live in that state.¹³ Moreover, each of the twelve languages listed above—with the exception of Urdu¹⁴—is the chief (and official) language of at least one major state, and every major state has one major language.

The idea of political units based on language appeared as early as 1921 when the Indian National Congress accepted the principle of linguistic provinces. The Congress periodically reaffirmed its commitment to this principle thenceforward, and as a result, shortly after independence the Government of India appointed a Linguistic Provinces Commission to study the question of establishing linguistic states. In December 1948 the Commission unanimously concluded that the formation of such states was 'not in the larger interests of the Indian nation'.¹⁵ Clearly adopting an assimilationist view of nation-building, the Commission warned that the demand for linguistic states would 'bring into existence provinces with a sub-national bias at a time when nationalism is yet in its infancy'.¹⁶ Popular agitation, however, eventually forced Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to agree to the formation of a Telugu-speaking state, Andhra Pradesh, in 1952, and to appoint a States Reorganization Commission in 1953 to resolve the issue. Within a few years of the Commission's report in 1955, most of the existing linguistic states had come into being, and India, willy nilly, found herself far down the road towards a multi-nationalism.

The development of linguistic states has been partially countered by the gradual growth of a national language, Hindi. This language serves as the official medium of local government and also (with regional variations) as the language of the vast majority of the population in a large block of north Indian states, namely, Rajasthan, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar. These six states, with approximately 42 per cent of India's total population in 1991, give Hindi a commanding position, since no other language can claim more

than 8 per cent of the population. Hindi's only serious rival has been English, which, although spoken as a mother tongue by only a tiny fraction of the population and as a second language by a somewhat larger number, still retains the prestige acquired under British rule and boasts the advantage of being the communication medium of an all-India elite.

Nationalist support for some form of Hindi as the national language predated the founding in 1885 of the Indian National Congress itself. In 1882, Babu Syamcharan Ganguli predicted in *The Calcutta Review* that a language he called 'Hindustani' which took the form of Urdu among Muslims and Hindi among Hindus would eventually become the lingua franca of India.¹⁷ By the early twentieth century the use of Hindi as the national language had begun to be proposed by national leaders. By 1925 Mahatma Gandhi had persuaded the Congress to accept as its official language a 'Hindustani' similar to that espoused by Ganguli. Nationalist opposition to English continued to grow, and by 1947 the need for an all-India official language to replace English had become widely accepted by Indian patriots. Accordingly, the Constitution of India included a provision that the official language of the Union should continue to be English for a period of fifteen years until 1965, when Hindi would replace it in most areas of official life.¹⁸ During this period the Government of India was to promote the use of Hindi in order to gradually replace English.

Anti-Hindi feeling had existed for some time in non-Hindi-speaking areas of India, however, particularly in Bengal and Tamil Nadu, where what some called 'Hindi imperialism' was resented. Many non-Hindi-speakers felt that Hindi's proposed role as sole official language would give Hindi speakers an unfair advantage in the competition for government employment. The Official Languages Act of 1963 intensified the controversy by giving Hindi the status of 'official language' and English the status of 'associate or additional official language'. Hindi advocates protested against what they considered to be the postponement of Hindi becoming the sole official language, while English supporters objected to the permissive rather than mandatory continuance of English. Widespread violence in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh marked the elevation of Hindi to the status of official language in January 1965.¹⁹

The Official Languages (Amendment) Act of 1968 strengthened the existing duality by not only stating (as did the 1963 Act) that English *might* continue to be used for all those official purposes for which it had

been used previously, but also by adding a list of specific purposes for which English *would* continue to be used. Moreover, the 1968 Act gave non-Hindi areas veto power over any displacement of English in this list and did not declare any time limit by which Hindi should become the sole official language. This situation has remained essentially unchanged to the present. Both English and Hindi share the position of official language, 'one *de facto* and the other *de jure* but hopeful of becoming *de facto* eventually, even though without any certain deadline'.²⁰

The most vocal support for Hindi has come from the Hindi-speaking areas of the north, particularly from India's most populous state, Uttar Pradesh. Much of the intensity of the Hindi movement has come from attitudes shaped during the long struggle of Hindi with Urdu, the chief rival for an alternative indigenous national language for more than three-quarters of a century before India's independence. Before Hindi supporters could launch their language on the high seas of national affairs in the twentieth century, they had to engage in a lengthy and often bitter struggle to keep it afloat in the more sheltered waters of provincial politics. While the Hindi movement in the nineteenth century sprawled across several areas of British India, including the Punjab, the Central Provinces, and Bihar, it reached the greatest intensity in the United Provinces (present-day Uttar Pradesh).²¹ Here, more than anywhere else, the process of the identification of language and religion envisaged in the 'multi-symbol congruence' of Brass dominated provincial language politics.

Linguistic and Social Background

To understand the Hindi movement of the nineteenth century, one must first become acquainted with some of the linguistic and social characteristics of the Hindi-speaking area. Language maps of India often show a single large area labelled 'Hindi' stretching across much of northern India, suggesting a homogeneous linguistic region. Such an image would be highly misleading, however, since this area displays immense diversity. One American linguist, John Gumperz, has characterized the internal complexities of the Hindi area by distinguishing three strata of speech. The first lies at the village level, where local dialects form a continuous chain from one end of the Hindi area to the other and beyond. While speakers from widely separated points along this linguistic continuum would have great difficulty in making themselves understood to each other, those from adjacent points would not.²²

The second stratum, that of 'regional standards', overlies the first.

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These regional standards occur in relatively homogeneous forms over large areas, and some of them possess literary traditions of several centuries. In Bihar, for example, three such standards, usually included under the rubric of Hindi, exist: Maithili, Magahi, and Bhojpuri. In Uttar Pradesh, the focus of our interest, four have importance: Bhojpuri in the eastern, Avadhi in the central, Braj Bhasha in the southwestern, and Khari Boli in the northwestern districts. Each of these has large numbers of speakers: the 1901 Census, the last to list such figures, showed that they included about 95 per cent of the population of the province.²³ Some of these languages—Maithili, Avadhi, Braj Bhasha, and Khari Boli—have literary traditions of several centuries, while others—Bhojpuri and Magahi—have rich oral folk literatures. Similar regional standards exist in other parts of the Hindi area. Villagers use these to talk with merchants in nearby trading centres and with villagers from other areas. Small town residents use them as their mother tongue, while both educated and uneducated city dwellers use them at home or among friends.²⁴

The third speech stratum, that of the 'standard' or 'Hindi-Urdu' overlies the first two. The various styles of this stratum serve as the mother tongue of only a minority of city residents; for most of those who speak it, the standard is a second or third speech variety. Historically this stratum originated in the Khari Boli regional standard area, and all of its styles share this common grammatical basis. Language scholars usually designate its two major divisions as Hindi and Urdu, though some argue these should be considered two different languages on political and cultural—not linguistic—grounds.²⁵ Aside from unimportant grammatical variations, vocabulary and script constitute the principal differences between the two. The most formal level of Hindi, sometimes referred to as 'high Hindi', uses a vocabulary saturated with Sanskrit, while the corresponding level of Urdu, sometimes called 'high Urdu', draws heavily on Persian and Arabic. On this level the two come close to mutual unintelligibility. Other less formal levels of Hindi and Urdu approach complete mutual intelligibility, the main difference being the script employed.

The Urdu script, a modified version of the Persian script, itself a modified version of the Arabic script, and the Nagari or Devanagari script usually used for Hindi make very contrasting visual impressions. The Urdu script flows across the page from right to left in graceful curves and loops accentuated by long connecting lines, while the Nagari marches from left to right in chunky blocks accompanied by a nearly

continuous horizontal line above each word. While a consonantal principle in which vowels receive only secondary importance at best underlies the Urdu script, a syllabic principle in which both vowels and consonants receive nearly equal treatment underlies the Nagari. Each script has strong links with the sacred languages of different religions. Most of the Sanskrit texts of Hinduism appear in Nagari, while most versions of the Koran use the Arabic script. This connection of script and language reinforces the tendency for Persian and Arabic words to flow into Urdu, and Sanskrit words into Hindi.

Hindi and Urdu also look to different literary pasts. Historians of the literatures of both claim traditions of several centuries. Those of Hindi include most of the literature written in Braj Bhasha, Avadhi, and other regional standards before the full development of Khari Boli Hindi literature in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Those of Urdu include the literature of Dakani (a regional variety of Urdu used in medieval central India) as well as the later-developing Urdu of northern India. Moreover, while Hindi turns to Sanskrit literature for many literary forms, Urdu draws inspiration from Persian and Arabic forms.

Urdu's association with Persian links this variety of the standard with a political past of Muslim dominance. From the founding of the Delhi Sultanate in the thirteenth century until the decline of the Mughal Empire in the eighteenth century, much of north India came under continuous Muslim rule. Even after British hegemony in the late eighteenth century, Muslim kingdoms continued to exist in this area; the most notable of these, Oudh, did not become part of British India until 1856. Along with the lengthy continuity of Muslim supremacy went the even lengthier continuity of the official language, Persian. Throughout the period of Muslim dominance Persian remained the pre-eminent language of administration in north India. Long after the power and prestige of its imperial patrons had declined, Persian's own prestige endured. Nearly eighty years after the battle of Plassey established the rule of the East India Company in Bengal in 1757, Persian still remained the official language of administration. Even after this status was lost, Persian remained a popular subject of study in parts of north India up to the beginning of the twentieth century.

When the Government of India replaced Persian in 1837, its surrogate Urdu (also known as Hindustani) provided linguistic continuity in much of Persian's former domain. Urdu kept some of the grammatical forms, much of the vocabulary, and the script of its more illustrious predecessor. Some writers of 'high Urdu' as one observer noted, carried

the use of Persian words to 'almost incredible extremes' so that one could find 'whole sentences in which the only Indian thing is the grammar, and with nothing but Persian words from beginning to end'.²⁶

✓ The same observer contended that Hindus, not Muslims, had created this highly Persianized language. Employed in the Muslim administration and familiar with Persian, they had created Urdu by using the Persian script for their vernacular and introducing Persian words in place of their own.²⁷ Whatever the truth of this contention, it points to the undisputed fact that in much of nineteenth century north India those familiar with Urdu and Persian included both Hindus and Muslims. Even by the middle of the century, the process of multi-symbol congruence which identified Hindus with Hindi and Muslims with Urdu had not begun in earnest.

Three Hindu communities had particularly strong ties with Urdu and Persian, namely, Kayasths, Kashmiri Brahmans, and Khattris. While other Hindu communities also studied Urdu and Persian, these three were the most disproportionately represented among Urdu users in terms of their numbers in the general population. The Kayasths, known for their attachment to literary occupations, government service, and Islamic culture, were the most numerous of the three.²⁸ In the United Provinces, the principal centre of the Hindi movement, the bulk of this community lived in the eastern portion of the province. Kashmiri Brahmans, coming from an area famed for Sanskrit learning, included some of the social and political elite of north India, the Nehrus of Allahabad being the best-known. Khattris, who had proved equally adept in trade and government service in the Punjab, were spread all over north India, and some could even be found as far afield as Central Asia. In the United Provinces during the second half of the nineteenth century the largest concentrations of this community lived in Banaras and Allahabad. Two of the three—Kayasths and Khattris—could claim relatively high status among their fellow Hindus, while the third—Kashmiri Brahmans—ranked among the very highest of Brahman castes. The linguistic predilections of these communities rested on the assumption that one could share the Urdu-Persian cultural tradition with the Muslim community without jeopardizing one's status as a Hindu.²⁹

The Hindi movement, however, began to challenge this assumption in the latter half of the century. Led by Hindu caste groups whose close association with Sanskrit and Hindi learning handicapped them in the increasing competition for government service, the essence of the movement lay in efforts to *differentiate* Hindi from Urdu and to make

Hindi a symbol of Hindu culture. Seen in this light, the Hindi movement formed part of a much broader process of the heightening of communal awareness in pre-independence India, a transformation of ethnic groups into communities and nationalities which culminated in the birth of Pakistan in 1947. The Hindi movement not only expressed but also reinforced this awareness.

Recent Studies

Several scholars have dealt with various aspects of the relationships of language, religion, and politics in north India during the nineteenth century. Jurgen Lütt's *Hindu Nationalismus in Uttar Pradesh 1867–1900*³⁰ discusses the development of a sense of common identity among Hindus in nineteenth century Uttar Pradesh. He deals with several aspects of this process including the cow protection movement, the Hindi movement, and the lives and thought of several leading Hindus. The largest single portion of his work presents a detailed study of the political and social thought of Bharatendu Harishchandra (1850–85) of Banaras, generally considered to be the earliest major writer of modern Hindi literature. Lütt's study covers much of the intellectual history of Hindu nationalism in the province, and devotes some attention to the political and cultural rivalries between Hindus and Muslims. His work gives little or no space to other important aspects of Hindu nationalism and the Hindi movement, however, such as Hindu-Muslim competition for government service, the role of voluntary associations in giving organizational expression to linguistic rivalries, the comparative development of Hindi and Urdu publications, the place of Hindi and Urdu in the educational system, and the relevant aspects of British language policy in neighbouring provinces.

Another relatively recent study by a German scholar, Kerrin Dittmer's *Die Indischen Muslims and die Hindi-Urdu-Kontroverse in den United Provinces*,³¹ contains a considerable amount of material on the Hindi-Urdu controversy in the United Provinces. Dittmer's work, unlike Lütt's, focuses on the Muslim community of UP and covers both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This study provides a valuable supplement to Lütt's through focusing more sharply on one of several areas of Hindu-Muslim relations, and by giving more space to the role of voluntary language associations and the place of Hindi and Urdu in the educational system. Dittmer's account of Hyderabad as a centre of patronage for Urdu is particularly useful. Yet Dittmer's study, like Lütt's, pays little or no attention to the comparative development of

Hindi and Urdu publications, gives only sketchy accounts of Hindu-Muslim competition for government service and British language policy in neighbouring provinces, and fails to mention the challenges from within the Hindu cultural tradition—Braj Bhasha and the Kaithi script—faced by Hindi and the Nagari script. Moreover, the author's description of the voluntary organizations lacks careful analysis of their structure, leadership, membership and finances.

A work by an Indian scholar, Jyotirindra Das Gupta's *Language Conflict and National Development*,³² deals chiefly with the language problems of India since independence, though giving some space to a discussion of the origins and development of the Hindi movement. After setting forth the theoretical background of the role of language in national development and giving a general description of the linguistic situation in contemporary India, Das Gupta turns to survey the rise of voluntary language organizations and their politics in pre-independence India. His discussion of nineteenth century language politics, unlike Lütt's and Dittmer's, relies mostly on secondary works. After analysing post-independence language politics, he presents a detailed description of several major Hindi and Urdu language associations, giving brief accounts of their origins and development, and more detailed analysis of their organizational structure, leadership, and finances. Das Gupta gives greater emphasis to the economic rivalries of Hindus and Muslims and attempts more analysis of language associations than either Lütt or Dittmer. Since his chief concern centres on twentieth century language politics, however, he too passes over many complexities of the Hindi movement of the nineteenth century.

Another work by an Indian scholar, Amrit Rai's *A House Divided: The Origin and Development of Hindi/Hindavi*,³³ focuses chiefly on the history of Hindi and Urdu up to the early eighteenth century, with some discussion of the implications of their relationship for subsequent events in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The heart of Rai's thesis lies in two assertions: first, prior to the decline of the Mughal empire, a common language known as Hindi or Hindavi united many Hindus and Muslims over wide areas of north and central India; second, during this decline the nature of Hindi/Hindavi changed by the deliberate removal of Sanskrit and Sanskrit-derived words and the addition of Persian and Arabic words. The divisive consequences of this 'reform', he contends, helped lead to the partition of British India and still plagues the subcontinent today. Rai presents a detailed and convincing analysis of the linguistic evidence, including copious samples

from numerous texts. Since he gives his attention mainly to pre-British India, however, he also must perforce present a much less detailed picture of many facets of the later Hindi movement.

The Present Study

This study differs from those described above in two major ways. First, I focus on the Hindi movement in nineteenth century north India and attempt to deal with all the relevant aspects of the movement, especially those ignored or only superficially dealt with in the previous studies. Thus I include detailed analyses of the comparative development of Hindi and Urdu publications, of the role of different languages and scripts in both indigenous and British educational institutions, of government language policy in education and administration in neighbouring provinces as well as in UP, of challenges to the dominance of Khari Boli Hindi and the Nagari script from Braj Bhasha and the Kaithi script, of voluntary language organizations, and of several other issues. Second, I try to systematically apply some of the theories of Karl Deutsch as modified by Paul Brass to the Hindi movement without sacrificing factual materials or analytical insights which do not fit neatly into their framework.

Although this study deals with the Hindi movement throughout north India, Uttar Pradesh receives the bulk of the attention for several reasons. First, the Hindi movement originated and remained centred in this province. Here were founded the two most important voluntary organizations for the promotion of the Hindi language and the Nagari script, namely, the Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras (1893) and the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan of Allahabad (1910). Second, during the nineteenth century the movement reached its greatest intensity in UP. To the west in the Punjab, the dominant position of Urdu remained practically undisputed during our period. To the south in the Central Provinces and to the east in Bihar, the Nagari script won victories two or three decades before the turn of the century. In UP, however, the struggle continued to the end of the century, marked by a significant political victory in 1900 when the provincial government issued a directive declaring Hindi and the Nagari script equal to Urdu and the Urdu script in the courts and offices. Finally, the bulk of the sources concern the UP as a direct consequence of the two preceding reasons.

In dealing with a movement characterized by strong partisan feelings, one needs to become aware not only of the biases of one's sources but also of one's own biases. Perhaps the most important bias comes from

knowing how things turned out, in this case the ultimate triumph of Hindi over Urdu, an outcome by no means obvious to the opposing partisans of the nineteenth century. This bias may well have led me to give greater importance to certain events which contemporary observers might have disregarded, and less importance to other events which they might have emphasized.

Another bias might appear to come from the use of a greater number of Hindi as compared to Urdu sources, from which a critic might well argue that a pro-Hindi perspective becomes a near-certainty. In rebuttal, I would point out that the great majority of the non-English sources for the Hindi movement *are* in Hindi. Moreover, the extensive sources in English include several which ably present the viewpoint of Urdu supporters. Lastly, I would argue that to understand the Hindi movement, one must attempt to see the process through the eyes of Hindi supporters, something best accomplished through using the sources in the language in which they customarily expressed themselves.

Yet another bias stems from the fact that I am a foreigner in India, and no foreigner, a critic might maintain, can hope to approach the detailed and intimate knowledge possessed by Indian scholars in dealing with the manifold complexities of Indian languages and literatures. True, few foreigners can hope to compete with Indians in mastery of Indian languages, and no foreigner can hope to compete with them in the intuitive understanding of the social and cultural context of these languages. Such shortcomings seem to inevitably dilute foreigners' understanding of what they study and unconsciously distort their judgments. While admitting the validity of such criticism, I would counter by asserting that the very shortcomings cited can become important assets. Thus, foreign scholars do not share the biases of Indian scholars. They bring viewpoints which, although subject to other biases, allow them to see and interpret events differently from Indian scholars. I would also argue that foreigners can more easily reach a more impartial position because they are more removed from the personal vested interests and influences of environment and education which give Indians both their superior intuitive understanding and their greater likelihood of unconscious bias.

Our imaginary critic might ask one last question: if we grant that foreigners may have certain advantages in reaching a more impartial standpoint, does this not mean that they become at the same time more neutral, more indifferent? To this I would reply with two statements. First, no scholar, whether foreign or Indian, can ever be completely

impartial. All of us, by virtue of being born in a certain place at a certain time, of being a certain sex or a certain age, of being educated in a certain way, etc., etc., must necessarily possess various largely unconscious habits of perception and interpretation of whatever we experience.³⁴ None of us can more than partially free ourselves from these inescapable sources of bias. Second, to attempt to become impartial does not necessarily mean to become neutral or indifferent. To be impartial means to weigh the evidence as even-handedly as possible before taking some definite stand, while to be neutral or indifferent means *not* taking a definite stand. I beg the reader's indulgence for first attempting to present the evidence before explicitly presenting a viewpoint in my conclusion.

Main Themes and Precis

The principal thesis of this book is that the Hindi movement of nineteenth century north India expressed a Hindu nationalism whose essence lay in the denial of existing assimilation to cultural traditions associated with Muslim rule and the affirmation of potential differentiation from these traditions. In this the Hindi movement overlapped with other expressions of Hindu nationalism such as the cow protection agitation in eastern UP in the 1890s, Tilak's revival of Hindu festivals in Maharashtra, and the growth of the Arya Samaj in the Punjab and other provinces of north India. In other words, one can view the Hindi movement as part of a process of multi-symbol congruence in which Hindu supporters of Hindi strove to transform the existing equations of Urdu = Muslim + Hindu and Hindi = Hindu + Muslim into Urdu = Muslim and Hindi = Hindu. In the twentieth century this process resulted in the coining of slogans such as 'Hindi, Hindu, Hindustan', a three-fold assertion of the identity of language, religion, and motherland.

This thesis needs qualification, however, for the major 'objective characteristics' of language and religion display considerable diversity. To begin with, some Hindus supported Hindi, while others opposed Hindi and promoted Urdu. Still other Hindus gave only lukewarm encouragement to Hindi, and the great majority remained uninvolved. Similarly, some Muslims supported Urdu, a very few supported Hindi, while many showed little concern. Moreover, Hindi included not only Khari Boli but also other literary dialects, and Urdu incorporated competing styles. Thus the Hindi movement consisted of certain groups of Hindus advocating a certain kind of Hindi asserting their differences from certain Muslims and attempting to impose their views on other

Hindus. Advocates of Khari Boli Hindi encountered opposition not only from Muslims, but also from other Hindus who had vested interests in Urdu and Persian or strong attachments to the literary traditions of other regional standards. Similarly advocates of the Nagari script faced a challenge not only from the Urdu script but also from the Kaithi script, a cursive version of the Nagari widely used in eastern UP and Bihar.

This study also suggests that the growth of the government's vernacular educational system in both Hindi and Urdu played a crucial role in the mobilization of those groups of Hindus who took the lead in the Hindi movement. The same groups who traditionally studied Hindi and Sanskrit in indigenous schools before the spread of government education continued their linguistic loyalties in the new system and eventually furnished much of the membership of the voluntary language organizations which espoused the cause of Hindi. Finding themselves in a linguistically bifurcated *educational* system whose main purpose lay in qualifying thousands of students for government service, but also in an *administrative* system which favoured one of the two vernacular mediums of education, Urdu, these groups naturally supported a movement which aimed at a rectification of this imbalance among other things. In Brass's terms, the perception of uneven rates of social change between different groups stimulated the development of group consciousness.

Economic motives alone, however, cannot explain the mobilization of Hindi supporters, for while the Hindi movement had strong anti-Muslim overtones, many of the Urdu-speaking elite who monopolized government service were Hindus. Cultural and emotional attitudes towards language, script, and literary traditions had as much importance as economic rivalry, for they furnished the channels through which this rivalry could be expressed. The promoters of Hindi engaged in Brass's process of 'internal value creation' by creating myths of the antiquity of Hindi and by attaching value to Hindi as a symbol of group identity.

For some of the most important leaders of the Hindi movement, cultural and emotional attitudes proved far more important than any personal economic gain to be realized through the government's potential adoption of Hindi and Nagari. Such attitudes led to the anti-Muslim aspects of the movement, for Hindi and the Nagari script, and Urdu and the Urdu script looked to different religious and historical traditions which had often clashed. Those who looked to the past glories of Hindi literature simultaneously looked to the splendour of periods of Hindu rule in which Muslims acted as invaders and villains. In other words, to

revive Hindi literature meant to revive the communal rivalries expressed therein.

Throughout the nineteenth century government played an important but inconsistent role, which added to linguistic and communal rivalry, especially in UP. First, while some government policies encouraged and patronized both Hindi and Urdu as two distinct entities, others sought to minimize the difference, while still others favoured Urdu. On the one hand, government helped to create and maintain two separate vernacular linguistic traditions, and on the other hand, thwarted the prospects of one of them. Moreover, British perceptions of 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' as the two fundamental divisions of Indian society," despite the manifest diversity of these 'objective characteristics' intensified communal rivalries. These perceptions served to weaken what Hindus and Muslims perceived themselves to have in common, and to strengthen what the two perceived as differences. In short, government aided the process of the identification of language and religion, i.e., the process of multi-symbol congruence. Persistent support of Urdu went hand-in-glove with government's special interest in maintaining the loyalty of Muslims. Where Muslims were numerous or influential—Punjab and UP—Urdu remained entrenched until independence; where they were not—Bihar and the Central Provinces—Hindi and the Nagari script replaced Urdu. Lastly, government, which held the power to grant or withhold recognition and patronage, served as the final arbiter to whom both Urdu and Hindi supporters appealed. Language agitators attempted to influence key officials through meetings, petitions with hundreds or thousands of signatures, delegations, letters, books and pamphlets. These officials could balance the claims of the contending parties, or throw their weight to one side or the other.

We can view the Hindi movement as a reactive force to contradictions in government policy, a force channelled through already existing cultural patterns. We can also see the movement as an active force to which government and the defenders of Urdu reacted. Both interpretations have merit, nor does one exclude the other. In either case, the supporters of Hindi needed some form of organization to transmit their aims to the literate public. (The rural masses were left almost entirely untouched by the Hindi-Urdu controversy.) During the latter part of the nineteenth century the Hindi press and a number of voluntary associations provided the necessary organization. Since newspapers and associations often had ephemeral existences and numerous other concerns besides Hindi, the movement lacked continuity for most of

this period, flaring up and dying down as circumstances shifted. With the founding of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha (Society for the Promotion of Nagari)* in 1893, the first important (and still existing) organization devoted exclusively to the progress of Hindi and the Nagari script, the movement gained greater force and stability. A few years later in 1900, Hindi advocates won their first major victory when the government of UP officially recognized Hindi and the Nagari script as equal to Urdu in the provincial courts and offices. Members of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha had much to do with this success.

At first glance, the course of the Hindi movement in the nineteenth century seems to fit the sequence of transformation from ethnic group to community to nationality posited by Brass. Before the 1860s no Hindi movement existed, as contemporary statements make clear, although the efforts of vernacular authors and the establishment of a linguistically bifurcated vernacular education system had created the potential for differentiation between Hindi and Urdu. During the 1860s the first statements identifying Hindi with Hindus and Urdu with Muslims appeared, and the process of developing an awareness of a common identity on the basis of language and religion began. This process continued during the rest of the century, and by 1900 the movement had won a major political victory. At this point, then, we should arrive at a Hindi-speaking Hindu nationality, for 'a community becomes a nationality . . . when it makes political demands and achieves a significant measure of success by its own efforts.'⁷

But the complexities of the linguistic situation and the composition of the community which won the victory conditioned the nature of the success. In brief, the political victory of those groups of Hindus who composed the 'community' behind the Hindi movement was vitiated by the open or tacit opposition of other groups of Hindus who continued to value the Urdu-Persian tradition for economic and cultural reasons. Hindi's supporters had failed to make the entire educated Hindu community identify itself with Hindi. Moreover, they faced challenges from another literary dialect (Braj Bhasha) and another script (Kaithi), both from within the Hindu cultural tradition. Khari Boli Hindi, then, was only one of several competing linguistic traditions and involved only part of even the educated Hindu community. Hence to speak of a Hindi-speaking Hindu nationality in 1900 would be premature, despite an apparently major political victory. This victory proved hollow precisely because advocates of Khari Boli Hindi could not speak for the entire Hindu community or even its educated portion. In short, the

community behind the Hindi movement cannot be said to have become a nationality in Brass's sense by 1900. This community was rather a small portion of a much larger body of Hindus, a portion attempting to convert other Hindus to a particular idea of Hindu nationality, the congruence of language and religion.

In the remainder of this study, I examine the development of the Hindi movement by presenting the relevant cultural, political, and economic background and then turning to a detailed history of the movement itself, using but not bound by the theoretical framework offered by Deutsch and Brass. Chapter II analyses the development and expansion of the printing of books and periodicals in UP, traces certain aspects of the history of Hindi and Urdu literature from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century, and discusses the challenge posed by Braj Bhasha. Chapter III outlines the essential features of government language policy in several provinces of north India through most of the nineteenth century, demonstrates the important and contradictory role of government in laying part of the necessary groundwork for and shaping the development of the Hindi movement, and analyses the claims of Kaithi. Chapter IV deals with the character of both indigenous and governmental educational systems in terms of languages studied, the social background of the students, and the relationship of education to employment, especially government employment. This chapter also argues that the social origins of the Hindi movement can be determined by comparing patterns of membership in educational systems and in voluntary Hindi associations. Chapter V describes and analyses the history of the Hindi movement from the initial controversies of the 1860s to the government decision of 1900 favouring Hindi and the Nagari script, while Chapter VI provides a summary and conclusion. The organization of this study is thus both chronological and topical, each succeeding chapter beginning its narrative and analysis at a later date than the preceding chapter and dealing with a different aspect of the subject. All through the study my principal concern focuses on describing and analysing the process by which some Hindus strove to bring 'Hindi' and 'Hindu' into congruence.

NOTES

1. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1846-47, p. 32. Spoken in 1847 by a Hindu student of Sanskrit at Benares College to Dr Ballantyne, Principal of the English Department. See the section of Chapter IV entitled 'Attitudes towards the Vernaculars'.

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2. Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication*, 2nd edition (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1966) pp. 96–105.
3. Karl Deutsch, 'Social Mobilization and Political Development', *The American Political Science Review*, LV, 3 (September 1961), p. 493, *passim*; Deutsch, *Nationalism*, pp. 120–2, 125–6, 137–42, 156–63.
4. Paul Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India* (London, 1974).
5. These objective characteristics refer to such things as language, culture, territory, diet, dress, etc. rather than to any role in a societal division of labour. Brass, *Language*, p. 8.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 22.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 23–43.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 28, 45–6.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 44–5.
10. S. K. Chatterji, *Indo-Aryan and Hindi*, 2nd edition (Calcutta, 1960), pp. 141–2.
11. The inclusion of languages under various rubrics, especially 'Hindi', has varied from census to census, and hence no figure can be exact. In the 1971 Census, for example, Bhojpuri, Magadhi, Chhattisgarhi, and Maithili (making up 6.1% of the total population) which previous censuses lumped under Hindi, were listed separately. Hindi, which was given 28.1% in this census, could thus be expanded up to 34.2%. Language figures from the 1991 Census were not available at the time of writing, but there is no reason to believe they would be significantly different in terms of percentages.
12. These ten (and the majority language of each) are: Andhra Pradesh (Telugu), Assam (Assamese), Gujarat (Gujarati), Karnataka (Kannada), Kerala (Malayalam), Maharashtra (Marathi), Orissa (Oriya), Punjab (Punjabi), Tamil Nadu (Tamil), and West Bengal (Bengali).
13. The chief exception is Bengali, the major language of both West Bengal and the independent nation of Bangladesh.
14. In 1989 Urdu became an additional official language in Uttar Pradesh. 1990 *Britannica Book of the Year* (Chicago, 1990), p. 449. Urdu has long been the official language of Pakistan.
15. *Report of the Linguistic Provinces Commission 1948* (New Delhi, 1948), p. 34.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
17. Syamcharan Ganguli, 'Hindi, Hindustani and the Behar Dialects', *The Calcutta Review*, LXXV, 1882, p. 25.
18. *Report of the Official Language Commission 1955* (New Delhi, 1957), pp. 105–31, 378–83.
19. B. R. Nayar, *National Communication and Language Policy in India* (New York, 1969), pp. 106–13.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 126.
21. The region of northern India known as the North-Western Provinces and Oudh came into existence over a period of more than 80 years through five major and several minor territorial acquisitions. During the Governor-Generalship of Warren Hastings, the ruler of Oudh, Asaf-ud-Daulah, was forced in 1775 to surrender areas under his feudatory, the Raja of Banaras. The next two additions came in rapid succession: in 1801 Governor General Wellesley forced the ruler

of Oudh to cede nearly half the remainder of his kingdom, and in 1803 English victories in the second Anglo-Maratha War brought large tracts from the Maratha prince Sindhia. The fourth gain came at the end of the Nepal War in 1816 when the British obtained the hill districts bordering on Nepal and Tibet.

Until 1834 all of this region came under the jurisdiction of the government of the Presidency of Bengal. In that year a new Presidency of Agra came into existence on a level with the three older Presidencies of Bengal, Bombay, and Madras. Two years later the new Presidency was demoted to the North-Western Provinces under the rule of a Lieutenant-Governor. The new province kept the same name and most of the same territory for a little more than forty years. Upon its inauguration, the North-Western Provinces (NWP) included the Delhi Territories (the city and district of Delhi, and several districts of what was to become the Punjab), Ajmer (a princely state of Rajputana), and the Saugor and Nerbudda territories (areas in the hilly plateau region of central India). Fourteen years later Merwara (another princely state in Rajputana) was added. In subsequent years each of these additions was incorporated into other jurisdictions: after 1857 the Delhi Territories went to the new province of the Punjab, in 1861 the Saugor and Nerbudda territories became part of the Central Provinces, and by 1871 Ajmer and Merwara had come under the supervision of the Government of India. 1840 and 1853 saw other minor additions to the south-western portion of the North-Western Provinces.

In 1856 came the fifth major territorial increase with the annexation of Oudh. The North-Western Provinces continued to be administered by a Lieutenant-Governor, while Oudh was governed by a Chief Commissioner. In 1877 the two provinces were completely amalgamated with the new name of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh and the separate offices of Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner combined into one. In 1902 the province was renamed the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh (or simply the United Provinces) and kept this name until independence in 1947 when it became Uttar Pradesh. C. Collin Davies, *An Historical Atlas of the Indian Peninsula*, 2nd edition (Oxford, 1959), pp. 52-5; 58-61, 66-7, 72-3; Douglas Dewar, *A Handbook to the English Pre-Mutiny Records in the Government Record Rooms of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh* (n.p., [c. 1919]), p. 484; *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Volume XXIV, New Edition (Oxford, 1908), pp. 158-9; R. C. Majumdar et al., *An Advanced History of India*, 2nd edition (London, 1963), pp. 694, 705-6, 720-1, 722-3.

22. John J. Gumperz, 'Language Problems in the Rural Development of North India', *Journal of Asian Studies*, XVI, 2 (February, 1957), pp. 252-4; John J. Gumperz, 'Dialect Differences and Social Stratification in a North Indian Village', *American Anthropologist*, LX, 4 (August, 1958), pp. 668-82; Gerald Kelley, 'The Status of Hindi as a Lingua Franca', in William Bright, editor, *Sociolinguistics* (The Hague, 1966), pp. 299-308.
23. *Census of India, 1901, Volume XVI, Part I*, pp. 179, 183. In calculating this percentage, 'Urdu or Hindostani' was taken to equal Khari Boli, both 'Braj' and 'Kaunaujia' were taken to equal Braj Bhasha, and 'Bagheli' was included in 'Awadhi'. See Sir George Abraham Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India* (Calcutta, 1903-28), Volume VI, p. 1 and Volume IX, p. 1.

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24. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey*, V, p. 46; VI, pp. 12, 19; IX, pp. 47–8, 74–5, 83; Gumperz, 'Language Problems', p. 82; Gumperz, 'Some remarks on Regional and Social Language Differences in India', in *Introduction to the Civilization of India* (Chicago, 1957), p. 33; John J. Gumperz and C. M. Naim, 'Formal and Informal Standards in the Hindi Regional Language Area', in Charles A. Ferguson and John J. Gumperz, editors, *Linguistic Diversity in South Asia: Studies in Regional, Social and Functional Variation*, *International Journal of American Linguistics*, XXVI, 3 (1960), p. 95; Ashok R. Kelkar, *Studies in Hindi-Urdu* (Poona, 1968), chart facing p. 16.
25. See, for example, Amrit Rai, *A House Divided: The Origin and Development of Hindi/Hindavi* (Delhi, 1984), pp. 287–9.
26. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*, IX, Part 1, p. 45.
27. Ibid.
28. See Karen B. Leonard, *The Kayasths of Hyderabad City*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1969.
29. *Census of India, 1911, Volume XV, Part I*, pp. 255, 273; William Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the Northwestern Provinces and Oudh*, Volume III (Calcutta, 1906), pp. 184, 213–16, 264–7, 274–7; Kelkar, *Studies in Hindi-Urdu*, p. 9; Percival Spear, editor, *The Oxford History of India*, 3rd edition (Oxford, 1958), p. 195.
30. Jurgen Lütt, *Hindu-Nationalismus in Uttar Pradesh 1867–1900* (Stuttgart, 1970).
31. Kerrin Dittmer, *Die Indischen Muslims und die Hindi-Urdu Kontroverse in den United Provinces* (Wiesbaden, 1972).
32. Jyotirindra Das Gupta, *Language Conflict and National Development* (Berkeley, 1970).
33. Amrit Rai, *A House Divided: The Origin and Development of Hindi/Hindavi* (Delhi: 1984).
34. In this regard see the writings of the American anthropologist Edward T. Hall, especially chapters 3 and 4 of his *Beyond Culture* (Garden City, 1977). Hall argues that 'once learned, behavior patterns . . . habitual responses . . . [and] ways of interacting gradually sink below the surface of the mind and, like the admiral of a submerged submarine fleet, control from the depths' (p. 42).
35. See Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims* (Cambridge, 1974), p. 98.
36. During our period, 'Nagari' when used by Hindi supporters, often had the meaning of both Hindi and the Nagari script used to write it. Hence the name of the Sabha implies a concern with both language and script. Shri Ray Krishna Das, Interview, April 6, 1972, Banaras.
37. Brass, *Language*, pp. 8–9.

CHAPTER II

The Development of Differentiation

It is my opinion that Hindi and Urdu are two very different languages. The Hindus of this country speak Hindi, while Muslims and those Hindus who have studied Persian speak Urdu. Sanskrit words abound in Hindi as Arabic and Persian words abound in Urdu. There is no necessity to use Arabic and Persian words in speaking Hindi, nor do I call that language Hindi which is filled with Persian and Arabic words.'

Introduction

Long before the beginning of the Hindi movement in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the ingredients existed for the differentiation of Khari Boli into the two distinct entities of Urdu and Hindi: the Urdu and Nagari scripts, and two differing sources for higher vocabulary, the classical languages of Persian and Arabic, and Sanskrit. From one point of view, the Hindi-Urdu controversy could be traced back to the medieval Muslim invasions of India and the resulting Indo-Persian linguistic synthesis which came to be known as Urdu. Another point of view appears in a recent study by an Indian scholar, who argues that the excessive Persianization of what he calls Hindi/Hindavi, formerly the common literary language of Hindus and Muslims, in the eighteenth century led to the dramatic linguistic and literary split between Hindi and Urdu.² From still another point of view one could claim that the first important expression of differentiation between Hindi and Urdu took place in Fort William College in the first years of the nineteenth century. Here, with the encouragement of some of the officials and instructors, two distinct prose styles, both based on Khari Boli, began to develop though their identification with separate religious traditions lay decades in the future. The rapid expansion of publishing and journalism later in the century strengthened the existing differentiation between Hindi and Urdu, and made impossible any assimilation between the two.

Similar ingredients for differentiation existed within the Hindi tradition long before the start of the Hindi movement. In the realm of poetry, the regional standard Braj Bhasha overshadowed Khari Boli until well into the twentieth century. Little poetry of any consequence appeared in Khari Boli until the 1880s, nor did this tradition reach respectability

in full until the 1920s with the appearance of the Chayavad (romantic or symbolist) movement. In the more practical realm of script, Nagari had several cursive variants, the most important of which—the Kaithi script—enjoyed considerable popularity in Bihar and the eastern UP, and sometimes even received the patronage of local or even provincial governments. Assimilation eventually outpaced differentiation in these two realms, however, and neither Braj Bhasha nor Kaithi posed any serious threat to Khari Boli Hindi in the Nagari script by the time of independence.

The Early Literary History of Urdu and Hindi

Scholars have traced the literary heritage of Urdu to as early as the fourteenth century, when a language known as Dakani flourished in the Deccan.³ Some of them assert that Dakani's grammatical basis stems from several closely related dialects—including Khari Boli—of the eastern Punjab and western UP.⁴ The earliest prose literature in this medium consisted largely of the treatises and popular tracts of various Sufi orders, written in many cases using a vocabulary largely free from Persian and Arabic terms and drawing instead on Sanskrit and local languages. Poetry in Dakani began to appear before the close of the sixteenth century; one of the earliest poets was Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah (ruled 1580–1611), renowned ruler of the Deccan Muslim kingdom of Golconda. Dakani poetry borrowed Persian literary forms and used Persian and Arabic vocabulary, but also freely employed indigenous metres and vocabulary and included both Persian and Indian literary themes.⁵

The Mughal campaigns of the seventeenth century not only put an end to the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golconda which had patronized Dakani, but also brought southwards the influence of the more Persianized Urdu of north India. While the style of the north eventually triumphed in the ensuing struggle, it was a poet of the south who established Persianized Urdu as a suitable vehicle for poetry in Mughal India. Wali (1667–1707) though born in the Deccan used a language style much like the Urdu of Delhi, and his visit to that city around the turn of the century marked the beginning of a poetic tradition in the north where Urdu had hitherto been considered unfit for poetry. A line of major Urdu poets arose in Delhi and continued well into the nineteenth century, while somewhat later poets in the eastern UP city of Lucknow began to rival their colleagues in Delhi. As Persianized Urdu gained in popularity and prestige, an older Muslim tradition of writing

poetry in Braj Bhasha, Avadhi, and other literary regional standards gradually came to an end, while many north Indian Hindus began to employ this new literary medium.⁶ Like Urdu poetry, Urdu prose showed little development before the early eighteenth century. Persian furnished the normal medium for prose, and heavily influenced early Urdu prose.⁷

Some historians of Hindi literature claim an ancestry for prose in Khari Boli Hindi stretching back to the sixteenth century, but they can adduce only a handful of examples before 1800.⁸ The tenuous nature of their claims becomes apparent when one authority argues on the strength of a single example that polished prose existed in Khari Boli Hindi more than sixty years before the founding of Fort William College, yet only a few pages later admits that 'in reality at that time [c. 1800] prose works existed in neither Urdu nor Hindi'.⁹ Poetry in Khari Boli Hindi, as we have seen, did not appear until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Because of this lack of antiquity in Khari Boli Hindi's literary tradition, Hindi supporters of the nineteenth, and Hindi historians of the twentieth century usually include the older literary traditions of Braj Bhasha, Avadhi, and other regional standards in discussing 'Hindi' literature of the more distant past. When discussing the literature of the more recent past and the present, however, they largely ignore these other traditions in favour of Khari Boli. Thus the myth of the antiquity of 'Hindi' literature masks the reality that Khari Boli Hindi literature lagged far behind its rival Urdu. Part of the process of the construction of myths through which elites attach value to symbols of group identity, then, seems to involve ignoring ambiguities or contradictions in these symbols.

The College of Fort William

On 10 July 1800, the Governor-General, Lord Wellesley, announced the founding of the College of Fort William in Calcutta. He intended that the new institution should improve both the education and the discipline of the young servants of the East India Company in India. The proposed curriculum included instruction not only in English, classics, geography, mathematics, modern European languages, and the natural sciences, but also in Hindu and Muslim law, Indian history, and Indian languages. For classical languages the College offered Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit, and for vernacular languages Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Marathi, Bengali, and Hindustani.¹⁰ Wellesley also announced that after January 1801 no civil service appointments would be given to

anyone failing to pass the appropriate language examinations.¹¹ Since few if any textbooks existed in any of the Indian vernaculars, a major portion of the efforts of the Indian and European language instructors went into creating such materials.

In 1800, neither the Hindi nor Urdu forms of Khari Boli had prose traditions of any importance.¹² Through the efforts of European and Indian scholars, teachers, and linguists at the College and at the nearby and closely-connected Serampore Mission, a new tradition of prose in both forms came into being. While the majority of the Hindi and Urdu works created at these institutions were language textbooks or missionary tracts and translations, some achieved significant popularity as works of literature. A new kind of literature blending Indian and Western forms and content now existed to serve as a model for future writers of Hindi and Urdu.

The most important European scholar in the development of Hindi and Urdu prose was an energetic Scotsman, John B. Gilchrist. Arriving in India in 1782, the 23-year-old Gilchrist soon embarked on the creation of his *English and Hindoostanee Dictionary* published in two parts in 1786 and 1790. Other works followed: *A Grammar of the Hindoostanee Language* in 1796, an *Appendix* to the grammar and dictionary in 1798, and *The Oriental Linguist*, an introductory treatise on Hindustani, also in 1798. In 1799 Wellesley appointed him as a teacher of Hindustani and Persian to the Company's junior civil servants, and a year later as Professor of Hindustani in the College. Gilchrist continued his connection with the college for more than three years, eventually resigning in 1804. During his tenure he authored or supervised the writing of a good many textbooks in several languages, saw them through press, continued his teaching duties, and invented a system of transliteration in Roman letters for Indian languages. For many years after his resignation and return to Britain, he continued to teach and to produce works on Hindustani.¹³

Gilchrist's writings suggest that the ingredients for the bifurcation of Khari Boli into two forms existed at the very beginning of the rise of the new prose tradition. Writing in 1798 about some of the difficulties in the composition of his Hindustani dictionary, carried out with the aid of Indian colleagues, he noted:

My learned associates, were some of them with their mind's eye roaming for far-fetched expressions on the deserts of Arabia, others were beating every bush and scampering over every mountain of Persia, while the rest were groping in the dark intricate mines and caverns of Sunskrit [sic] lexicography, totally overlooking in these pedantic excursions the most

essential reflections, that my operations were avowedly directed to, and calculated for the open, accessible plains of Hindoostan.¹⁴

Gilchrist's words clearly imply that Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian scholars felt obliged to stuff the vernaculars with classical vocabulary. A quarter century later Captain Price, one of Gilchrist's successors at the College, referred to the same phenomenon. 'The great difference between Hindee [Hindi] and Hindoostanee [Urdu],' he wrote in 1824, 'consists in the words, those of the former being almost all Sunskrit [sic] and those of the latter, for the greater part Persian and Arabic'¹⁵

The College favoured Hindustani (Urdu) over any form of Hindi, presaging the later attitudes of many British officials towards the two. The regulations establishing the College made no mention of Hindi among the subjects to be taught, although a Nagari writing master appeared on the rolls of the Hindustani Department in 1801, the year in which instruction actually began. Later appointments included 'Bhakha' (Hindi) pandits, and in 1807 a revision of the regulations (confining the institution to instruction in Oriental languages and literatures) added Hindi to Hindustani, Persian, Sanskrit, Bengali, and Marathi. Hindi was not seriously taught until 1815, however, and did not receive formal recognition as an important vernacular until 1825, only a few years before the College ceased to be a viable educational institution. Moreover, no separate department of Hindi ever seems to have existed; both teaching and the writing of textbooks in Hindi appear to have been subsumed under the Hindustani department. The great majority of works produced by this department were in Hindustani (some of which were printed in the Nagari script) while only a few works appeared in Khari Boli Hindi and Braj Bhasha.¹⁶

Though most of the works in Hindi and Urdu by the European and Indian scholars of the College had little popularity or influence, being chiefly intended as textbooks and readers for language students, a few of them achieved a considerable reputation. *Prēm Sāgar* (*The Ocean of Love*) of Lallu Lal, a Bhakha pandit, first appeared in 1805 and went through at least fifteen editions during the nineteenth century, including several in English and at least one in the Gujarati script. This book consisted of a translation from Braj Bhasha verse into Khari Boli Hindi prose, and told the story of the life of Krishna based on the Sanskrit scripture, the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. Lallu Lal deliberately set out to exclude words from languages associated with Muslims, so although a few Persian and Turkish words crept in, the vocabulary overflowed with Sanskrit, Braj, and Avadhi borrowings.¹⁷

Several Urdu works enjoyed a popularity even greater than that of

Prem Sāgar. Singhasun Butteese, a collection of stories by Lallu Lal and Kazim Ali Jawan went through at least eighteen editions by 1900, many of them in the Nagari script, while *Bueta Puchese* by Lallu Lal and Mahar Ali Khan, a similar collection, went through at least twenty-two editions, including several translations into English.¹⁸ *Bāgh-o-Bahār*, a collection of tales translated from Persian by Mir Amman under Gilchrist's supervision, proved the most popular of all, reaching thirty editions by 1900, including translations into English and French.¹⁹ The language of *Singhasun* and *Bueta* has been described by one scholar as 'a strange mixture of Sanskrit, Perso-Arabic, Braj Bhasha, Avadhi and Bihari words',²⁰ a mixture which might well have represented a linguistic compromise between the Hindu and Muslim joint authors.

Early Nineteenth Century Prose Writers in Hindi and Urdu

Early nineteenth century prose literature in both forms of Khari Boli showed considerable variation in vocabulary sources, as we have seen, and authors saw no discrepancy in using the Nagari script for both Hindi and Urdu. Moreover, a brief glimpse at the careers of the four most important writers in Khari Boli Hindi during this period indicates that they had no objections to drawing from both Hindi and Muslim cultural traditions. Two of these writers, Lallu Lal and Sadal Mishra, served as pandits in the College of Fort William, while the other two, Munshi Sadasukhlal and Insha Allah Khan, had more independent literary careers.

Lallu Lal (c. 1763–c. 1824), a Gujarati Brahman from Agra, first joined the staff of the College in 1801. During his tenure he authored at least twelve works, among them prose writings in Braj Bhasha, Khari Boli Hindi, and Hindustani. Sadal Mishra, a Bihari Brahman, worked at the College from 1803 to 1809. The works accredited to him include a translation of a Sanskrit text into a Khari Boli Hindi flavoured with Braj Bhasha and the regional standards of Bihar, and the *Rāmcharitra*, a heavily Sanskritized Khari Boli version of the story of the Hindu deity Rama. Mishra also authored a Hindi-Persian vocabulary, and edited a version of the *Rāmcharitmānas*, the most famous work of the great sixteenth century Avadhi poet Tulsidas.²¹

Munshi Sadasukhlal (c. 1746–c. 1824), a Kayasth from Delhi, spent several years in the service of the East India Company at Chunar, a city of southeastern UP. Though he authored many books, including a good deal of poetry in both Persian and Urdu, the work which won him a place among Khari Boli Hindi writers was a translation of portions of

Sanskrit scripture, the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, in which he made extensive use of words borrowed directly from Sanskrit.²² The last of the quartet, Insha Allah Khan, son of a Muslim courtier at Murshidabad,²³ spent much of his life at the court of the Muslim ruler of Oudh after a brief sojourn at the Mughal court in Delhi. By the time of his death in 1818 he had won some little reputation as an Urdu poet. In 1803 he wrote a work in Khari Boli entitled *Rānī Ketkī kī Kahānī* (*The Story of Queen Ketkī*) in which, though using the Urdu script, he made a deliberate and successful attempt to exclude words of Arabic and Persian origin. Despite his success in this, however, some Hindi scholars have refused to accept his work as Hindi because of what they consider to be a Persianized word order, and some historians of Urdu literature have classified it as Urdu.²⁴

This brief survey reveals an important characteristic of the earliest Khari Boli prose in Hindi and Urdu: this literature shows none of the later rigid divisions between Hindu and Muslim, Nagari and Urdu scripts, or Sanskrit and Perso-Arabic vocabularies. The three Hindu authors wrote in languages associated with Muslims, while the Muslim author had the greatest success in excluding Persian and Arabic words. Works in Hindustani (Urdu) appeared in both the Urdu and Nagari scripts, and in several cases both Hindi and Urdu texts included vocabulary from several languages. While the three Hindus made extensive use of words borrowed directly from Sanskrit in writings derived from Hindu scriptures—they could hardly have borrowed suitable Arabic and Persian words for this purpose—they did not feel obliged to reject the Muslim cultural heritage in their other writings. The identification of Hindi with Hindu and Urdu with Muslim lay in the future, though a new prose model of highly Sanskritized Khari Boli excluding Persian and Arabic words now existed. In terms of our theory, a potential symbol for differentiation now existed for the transformation of an ethnic group into a subjectively conscious community.

Later Writers in Hindi and Urdu Prose

During the next half century prose literature in the Urdu form of Khari Boli began to flourish and by the mid-nineteenth century had a well-established tradition. Unlike Khari Boli Hindi, Urdu had a well-developed poetic tradition to serve as a model for style, although Urdu authors faced a major problem in deciding the degree of Persianization to be allowed.²⁵ Literary prose in Khari Boli Hindi did not begin to prosper until the third quarter of the century, although large numbers of tracts, pamphlets, and translations of scripture by missionaries began

to appear in the early part of the century, followed later by large numbers of elementary school texts. Often these publications used a style with few Arabic and Persian words, and many Sanskrit ones.²⁶ The second half of the century saw a steady expansion in the production of works in both the Hindi and Urdu forms of Khari Boli. The bulk of this production appeared in prose, though a substantial fraction appeared in poetry.

By the end of the century two distinct prose styles had evolved in both forms of Khari Boli, according to George Grierson, author of the *Linguistic Survey of India*. Lucknow became the major centre for a highly Persianized style of Urdu whose writers delighted in composing sentences which, except for an auxiliary verb at the end, were 'throughout Persian in construction and vocabulary', while Banaras became the hub for a highly Sanskritized style of Hindi whose writers made heavy use of words borrowed directly from Sanskrit.²⁷ Between these two extremes lay two more moderate styles, one associated with Urdu authors in Delhi who used a far less Persianized language, and the other with authors in Agra who avoided excessive Sanskritization and freely admitted widely used foreign words into their writings.²⁸

The categories posited by another contemporary observer, the Indian scholar Ayodhya Prasad Khatri, tallied for the most part with those of Grierson. Khatri, a resident of Muzaffarpur in western Bihar, proposed five different styles of Khari Boli in his book *Khari Bolī kī Padya* (*Khari Boli Poetry*) published in 1887. These included: Maulvi's Hindi, Pandit's Hindi, Munshi's Hindi, Pure Hindi, and Eurasian Hindi. Maulvi's Hindi, full of long and difficult Arabic and Persian words, and Pandit's Hindi, full of equally forbidding Sanskrit terms, corresponded with the styles of Lucknow and Banaras. Pure Hindi, which used neither foreign nor difficult Sanskrit words, and Munshi's Hindi (known to Europeans as 'Hindustani') which lay between the extremes of Lucknow and Banaras, roughly matched the Hindi of Agra and the Urdu of Delhi. The remaining style, Eurasian Hindi, employed formidable English expressions.²⁹

Thus Khari Boli Hindi writers could choose their style from somewhere along a spectrum ranging from a less Sanskritized Hindi allowing the use of foreign words to a highly Sanskritized Hindi eschewing them. Similarly Urdu writers could choose a style lying somewhere between a moderately Persianized to an excessively Persianized Urdu. At the two extremes, Hindi and Urdu approached mutual unintelligibility, differentiated by script, vocabulary, and even grammatical features, while in

the middle ground they approached uniformity, differentiated mainly by script (and sometimes not even by that). Moreover, the very choice of subject matter influenced style, Hindu contexts (such as commentaries on scriptures) encouraging Sanskrit vocabulary, and Islamic contexts Arabic and Persian vocabulary.³⁰ Even the writings of a single author could display different styles. During the latter decades of the century, however, as the process of multi-symbol congruence began and intensified, Hindi writers clustered into two groups rather than spreading over the entire spectrum, those who adopted a more Sanskritized style and those who opted for a more Persianized one. The issue continued to agitate the Hindi literary world into the next century.³¹

Among the foremost in the ranks of Sanskritizers, though a resident of Agra, stood Raja Lakshman Singh (1826–1896). A graduate of Agra College in English and Hindi, and a Deputy Collector, he translated several Sanskrit works as well as English legal texts into Hindi. While the nature of many of these works made a Sanskritized vocabulary natural, Singh went further by intentionally avoiding the use of Arabic and Persian words. The preface to his Hindi version of the Sanskrit poet Kalidasa's *Raghuvāṣa*, published in 1878, made his viewpoint clear:

It is my opinion that Hindi and Urdu are two very different languages. The Hindus of this country speak Hindi, while Muslims and those Hindus who have studied Persian speak Urdu. Sanskrit words abound in Hindi as Arabic and Persian words abound in Urdu. There is no necessity to use Arabic and Persian words in speaking Hindi, nor do I call that language Hindi which is filled with Persian and Arabic words.³²

By this time the process of identifying Hindi with Hindu and Urdu with Muslim had been underway for more than a decade, and Singh's views underline the first half of this equation unambiguously.

Raja Shiva Prasad (1823–1895), though a resident of Banaras, ranked among the best-known advocates of a more Persianized style. A long-time government servant who eventually became Inspector of schools in the NWP, he authored about forty works, mainly school texts, using both Hindi and Urdu, and both the Nagari and Urdu scripts. These works contained both Sanskritized Hindi and moderately Persianized Hindi approaching Urdu. In 1845 he founded the first Nagari-script newspaper of the NWP, the *Benares Akhbār*, whose style was Urdu with a few Sanskrit words.³³

His views on the proper style of Khari Boli showed considerable inconsistency, however, for he made strong statements on behalf of both Hindi and Urdu at different times. On one occasion he wrote that Urdu was becoming the mother tongue of the province, and that no one

could justify forcibly introducing Sanskrit words entirely unfamiliar to the people merely because he used the Devanagari script.³⁴ Yet a few months later he denounced the influence of Persian and Urdu as destructive to the Hindu nationality.³⁵ Despite the apparent contradictions in his opinions, Prasad vigorously supported the Nagari script for both educational and administrative purposes throughout his career. Perhaps the judgement of two of his successors in the Hindi literary world sums up his position the most equitably: they regarded him as one who worked hard for the Nagari script, but wrote Hindi mainly in a style borrowing from Persian and Urdu.³⁶

Whatever the merits or demerits of Sanskritized or Persianized Hindi, the reading public clearly preferred the latter, provided the authors used familiar words. The most popular writer in either Hindi or Urdu before World War I was Devki Nandan Khatri (1861–1913). Khatri, a resident of Banaras, wrote in a simple style of Khari Boli using the Nagari script that nevertheless made extensive use of common Persian and Arabic words. His two best-known series of novels, *Chandrakāntā* and *Chandrakāntā Santati*, published beginning in 1888, brought him both fame and fortune.³⁷ The income from these novels—highly romantic fantasies in the *dāstān*³⁸ tradition of Urdu literature, filled with kings and princesses, magicians and spirits, jungles and palaces—enabled him to found his own press within ten years, and continued to support his family for many years after his death.³⁹ In the Urdu literary world, a similar style of Khari Boli proved most popular. Here writers of the Delhi school such as Nazir Ahmad, Pandit Ratan Nath Sarshar, and Abdul Halim Sharar, who avoided the excessively Persianized style of the Lucknow school, gained the greatest acceptance.⁴⁰

Bharatendu Harishchandra (1850–1885), almost universally recognized by Indian and Western scholars as the first great writer of Khari Boli Hindi, used both styles of Hindi, much like his contemporary Raja Shiva Prasad. One Indian scholar divides his writings into two categories: first, one which imitated ordinary conversation and employed a few common Persian and Arabic words, and second, one which dealt with more serious subjects and used many Sanskrit words, occasionally to excess.⁴¹ Bharatendu championed the cause of both Hindi and the Nagari script even more vigorously than Prasad, and sometimes even ridiculed his older contemporary for using unfamiliar and jaw-breaking Persian words in his school texts. In addition, both the quality and quantity of his literary output far exceeded that of Shiva Prasad. Besides writing numerous essays, plays, a good deal of poetry, and translations

from English, Sanskrit, and Bengali, Bharatendu also found time to establish several Hindi periodicals, to befriend and patronize many younger Hindi authors, and to be the centre of a circle of prominent writers.⁴²

The Language of Poetry: Braj Bhasha vs. Khari Boli

Although Bharatendu used Khari Boli almost exclusively for prose (except for passages in local dialects or regional standards, especially Bhojpuri, in some of his plays), he turned to Braj Bhasha for most of his poetry.⁴³ His poet companions also wrote almost exclusively in Braj Bhasha. In doing so they continued a lengthy tradition: for more than two centuries the great majority of 'Hindi' poets had composed their verses in Braj Bhasha, and most of the rest in Avadhi. Only a handful of Khari Boli Hindi poets had appeared before Bharatendu began his career, and the earliest poem of any importance in this medium appeared a year after his death when Shridhar Pathak (1859–1929) translated Oliver Goldsmith's 'The Hermit'.⁴⁴

Thus, Khari Boli Hindi had won acceptance as a vehicle of prose but not as an instrument of poetry, the older and more prestigious form of Hindi literature. Two years after Bharatendu's death in 1885, Ayodhya Prasad Khatri, the first champion of Khari Boli Hindi poetry, fired the opening salvo of a controversy that continued for several decades. In his book *Khari Bolī kā Padya* (*Khari Boli Poetry*), Khatri, a resident of Bihar, pleaded for the use of Khari Boli for Hindi poetry. He also spent a considerable sum to publish and distribute his work to a large number of well-known Hindi supporters.⁴⁵

His efforts met with little initial success, however, for his views must have succeeded in antagonizing nearly everyone. He asked Urdu writers to abandon their own script for Nagari, and Hindi poets to give up Braj Bhasha for Khari Boli. He argued that Urdu was only one style of Hindi, that Urdu poetry was Khari Boli poetry, and that Braj Bhasha poetry was not Hindi poetry. To identify Urdu with Hindi would certainly have offended both Hindi and Urdu supporters, while to exclude Braj Bhasha from the realm of Hindi would certainly have angered Hindi advocates. Both Hindi and Urdu partisans had made great efforts to assert the separate identities of their respective forms of Khari Boli, and Hindi lovers regarded Braj Bhasha as part of Hindi's glorious literary past.⁴⁶ Khatri's attempt to assimilate Urdu with Hindi and to differentiate Braj Bhasha from Hindi was bound to fail.

Khatri did succeed, however, in starting a debate in the Hindi literary

world. For several months in 1887 and 1888 a series of articles attacking and defending Khari Boli as a medium of poetry appeared in *Hindustan*, the NWP&O's only Hindi daily.⁴⁷ Shridhar Pathak, the defender, had earned a reputation as a poet not only of Khari Boli but also of Braj Bhasha. Radha Charan Goswami, the attacker, edited the Hindi newspaper *Bharatendu* in Brindaban in western NWP&O.⁴⁸

Their debate centred around four primary issues: the proper relationship of the languages used for prose and poetry, the linguistic identities of Braj Bhasha and Khari Boli, their technical capabilities, and their poetical qualities. Goswami declared, not surprisingly, that the language of poetry and prose could never be the same. Just as Sanskrit playwrights had used Sanskrit for their poetic sections and the less polished Prakrit for their prose, so Hindi writers should use Braj Bhasha for poetry and Khari Boli for prose. Pathak, as had Khatri, maintained that the language of prose and poetry should be the same, namely, Khari Boli.

Goswami claimed that Khari Boli and Braj Bhasha could not be considered separate languages since in his opinion only minor grammatical differences divided the two. Furthermore, he feared that accepting Khari Boli as a medium of Hindi poetry would mean creating another vehicle for the spread of Urdu. Pathak, on the other hand, alleged that the two rivals must be regarded as separate languages, since major, not minor grammatical differences separated them. Unlike Khatri, he neither equated Hindi and Urdu nor excluded Braj Bhasha from the world of Hindi poetry.

Pathak took the offensive on the issue of technical capabilities pointing out that Khari Boli was used and understood over a far wider area than Braj Bhasha, and that the former had become the almost exclusive medium for prose. In addition, Braj displayed a regrettable lack of standardization; several different local forms often appeared for the same word. Goswami confined himself to the simple assertion that those who said Braj could be understood only in a limited area erred.

Goswami had the better of the argument on the issue of poetical qualities. He observed with pride that Braj boasted a roster of poets second to none, and had become a fit language for poetry through centuries of polishing and refinement. Conversely, no poetry worth the name had appeared in Khari Boli, nor did it allow the use of the best Hindi metrical forms. Only those poets who could not write good Braj Bhasha poetry, he added with a touch of malice, wanted to write in Khari Boli. Pathak conceded that Khari Boli had very few poets, but pleaded that the newer medium had just entered childhood and given

time could acquire the same qualities of sweetness and melodiousness which characterized Braj. In addition, Braj had reached its limits in several ways and should now make room for the newcomer. Even if one granted for the sake of argument that all Hindi poetry up till now had been in Braj, this did not mean that Braj must continue to be the only medium in the future. Pathak contended further that Khari Boli poets could draw on a wide variety of metrical forms and observed that the forms commonly used for Braj composed only part of the forms which could be used for Hindi.

In time, Pathak's case eventually proved to be the stronger, but the outcome remained in doubt for nearly three decades. By the turn of the century Khari Boli poetry had become more respectable. Hindi poets had begun to realize that Khari Boli presented them with a more flexible medium than Braj to express their feelings about the new political and social movements of their time. Braj literature had long centred around the life and loves of Krishna, the most important avatar of the great Hindu deity Vishnu. Khari Boli, lacking any tradition of religious themes, could better fit the multitude of new secular themes, especially nationalism, which demanded expression in the early twentieth century.⁴⁹ Moreover, Khari Boli had the immense advantage of widespread use in prose, whether Hindi or Urdu. In this regard, we must give considerable significance to the fact that no movement ever developed to make Braj Bhasha the language of prose.

Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi (1864–1938) played the most prominent role in the gradual acceptance and eventual supremacy of Khari Boli as a medium of poetry. A Brahman from western NWP&O, Dwivedi spent several years of his life in Bombay where he came under the influence of Marathi poetry, which made extensive use of Sanskrit metrical forms.⁵⁰ Dwivedi advocated a Sanskritized style of Hindi, strongly opposing Urdu and those who used Urdu words in Hindi, and recommending Sanskrit words to replace Urdu words. Equally important, he took to heart a dictum of Wordsworth's that the language of poetry and prose should be one and the same, and worked tirelessly to make Khari Boli Hindi that language. To Dwivedi it seemed that separate languages for poetry and prose would only handicap the spread of Hindi literature among the people.⁵¹ His position as editor of *Saraswatī*, the most influential literary magazine in Hindi during the first two decades of the twentieth century, gave Dwivedi's views considerable importance. During his tenure of more than twenty years, he influenced many younger poets and writers through his painstaking revision of the works

they submitted for publication. One of his proteges, Babu Maithili Sharan Gupta (1886–1965), became a major Hindi poet.³²

The unremitting efforts of Dwivedi and his associates gradually brought Khari Boli poetry from a defensive to an offensive position.³³ During the first meeting of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan (Society for Hindi Literature) in Banaras in 1910, the new organization called on Shridhar Pathak and Radha Charan Goswami to renew their debate of more than twenty years earlier.³⁴ The disputation which followed made clear that the issue had become not whether Hindi poets should use Khari Boli, but rather how much they should continue to use Braj Bhasha.

During the second meeting of the Sammelan a year later in Allahabad, Pandit Badrinath Bhatta (later to become Professor of Hindi in Lucknow University) declared that the day of Khari Boli's rival had passed, though the Hindi language would not be the Hindi language without Braj poetry. He went on to poke fun at Braj supporters for not understanding the importance of a suitable national language.³⁵ Replying to those who extolled the superior poetic qualities of Braj, he remarked caustically that in an age when India needed men, the excessive sweetness and melodiousness of Braj had turned Indians into eunuchs.³⁶ During the fifth meeting of the Sammelan at Lucknow in 1914, Maithili Sharan Gupta spoke even harsher words: he called the advocates of Braj Bhasha enemies of India's national language, Khari Boli Hindi.³⁷

By 1914, then, the Hindi literary world had accepted Khari Boli as the most important, though not the only vehicle of Hindi poetry, and opposition to the new medium had become muted.³⁸ With the beginning of the Chayavad (romantic) movement in Hindi literature, a series of highly talented poets established Khari Boli as *the* medium for Hindi poetry once and for all.³⁹ Yet the Braj Bhasha tradition continued to find support. The September 1913 issue of *Saraswati*, for example, reported that the schools of the United Provinces⁴⁰ still taught Hindi poetry only in Braj Bhasha.⁴¹ Babu Jagannath Das 'Ratnakar', one of the last prominent poets of Braj, kept on writing until well after 1920, while other Braj poets persevered long after independence.⁴²

In sum we may ask what led to the eventual triumph of Khari Boli as the medium of Hindi poetry? First, the newcomer had the tremendous advantage of already being by far the most widespread prose medium (in both Hindi and Urdu) of any of the regional standards⁴³ of Hindi. As a result, many north Indian Hindu nationalists had already accepted Khari Boli Hindi as the most appropriate candidate for a national

language. Moreover, Khari Boli Hindi's lack of a poetic tradition of religious literature or of erotic literature of dubious moral value made it more capable of dealing with new secular themes. Finally, after Dwivedi's successful Sanskritization of Khari Boli poetry, no one could seriously oppose the new literary medium on the grounds that it threatened to become Urdu.⁶⁴ The linguistic symbol of Khari Boli Hindi had been further manipulated and refined.

Patterns of Publishing: Languages

While the arguments on the proper style for Hindi and the proper language for poetry ebbed and flowed, the river of Hindi publications turned into a torrent, threatening to overwhelm the more modest stream of Urdu. During the approximately sixty years from 1868 to 1925, publications in languages representing the Hindu heritage (chiefly Sanskrit, Hindi, Sanskrit-Hindi, and Hindi-Sanskrit) generally increased, sometimes dramatically. During the same period, publications in languages representing the Islamic heritage (mainly Arabic, Persian, Urdu, and their combinations in dual-language works) generally decreased, sometimes strikingly. (See Table 1.)

In theoretical terms, as social mobilization (see Chapter I) increased—mirrored by the total number of publications—Islamic heritage languages failed to assimilate Hindu heritage languages—reflected by the decline in the one, and the increase in the other. The rate of social mobilization outstripped that of assimilation, and Hindi became increasingly dominant. The most important period in this process came in the first ten or fifteen years of the twentieth century. Prior to this the Islamic-heritage languages had nearly equalled or even exceeded Hindu-heritage publications in numbers. After this they had lost their former position for good. (See Table 1.)

The career of Prem Chand (1880–1936), one of the greatest novelists and short-story writers in both Hindi and Urdu, illustrates this process. A Kayasth educated in the Persian and Urdu literary tradition, Prem Chand usually wrote his works in Urdu before rewriting them in Hindi. While he continued this practice well into the 1920s, he gradually turned more and more to Hindi for his livelihood, since this medium assured him a wider and more appreciative audience and greater remuneration.⁶⁵

The best documentation for this massive change comes from a series of quarterly reports of the books and periodicals published or printed in the territories under their jurisdictions issued by various provincial

TABLE 1
Trends in the Growth Rates of the Production of Books and
Periodicals in the United Provinces, 1868-1925

A. Islamic-Heritage^a

Year	Total	Urdu	Persian	Arabic	Urdu- Arabic	Other
1868	332,586	217,153	82,913	27,320	—	5,200
% Grand						
Total	39.1	25.5	9.7	3.2	—	0.6
Base	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	—	1.00
1884	488,062	284,511	109,801	30,200	31,300	32,250
% Grand						
Total	47.3	27.5	10.6	2.9	3.0	3.1
Base	1.47	1.31	1.32	1.11	1.00	6.20
1900	777,745	548,030	74,255	35,550	69,945	49,965
% Grand						
Total	41.2	29.0	3.9	1.9	3.7	2.7
Base	2.34	2.52	0.90	1.30	2.24	9.61
1914	813,655	688,505	24,975	3,000	59,250	37,925
% Grand						
Total	23.9	20.3	0.7	0.1	1.7	1.1
Base	2.45	3.17	0.30	0.11	1.89	7.29
1925	591,640	513,085	10,800	4,250	45,475	17,850
% Grand						
Total	12.6	11.0	0.2	0.1	1.0	0.4
Base	1.78	2.36	0.13	0.16	1.45	3.43

Note * All figures have been compiled from the *NWP&O Quarterly Pubs Rpt* and the *UP Quarterly Pubs Rpt* for the years indicated. All percentages have been calculated to the nearest 0.1%; rounding off means that the total percentages for separate Islamic-heritage languages will not always exactly equal that for Islamic-heritage languages as a whole. The category 'Other' includes various two- or three-language combinations of Arabic, Persian, and Urdu.

governments. This series, which began in 1868 in most provinces and continued throughout the period of British rule in India, displayed several imperfections, particularly during its earlier years. Carelessly framed definitions brought about the inclusion of illegitimate materials such as time-tables, class lists, and catalogues. On the other hand, the

Table 1 (Continued)

B. Hindu-Heritage^b

Year	Total	Hindi	Sanskrit	Hindi-Sanskrit	Other	GRAND TOTAL (A+B)
1868	412,882	392,316	10,866	9,700	105,836	851,304
% Grand Total	48.5	46.1	1.3	1.1	12.4	
Base	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
1884	432,282	392,882	20,000	19,400	112,580	1,032,924
% Grand Total	41.9	38.0	1.9	1.9	10.9	
Base	1.05	1.00	1.84	2.00	1.06	1.21
1900	890,992	758,992	68,750	63,250	218,168	1,886,905
% Grand Total	47.2	40.2	3.6	3.4	11.6	
Base	2.16	1.93	6.33	6.52	2.06	2.22
1914	2,131,086	1,868,926	71,350	190,810	454,147	3,398,888
% Grand Total	62.7	55.0	2.1	5.6	13.4	
Base	5.16	4.76	6.57	19.67	4.29	3.99
1925	3,585,507	3,078,241	148,900	358,366	501,891	4,678,858
% Grand Total	76.6	65.8	3.2	7.7	10.7	
Base	8.68	7.85	13.7	37.0	4.74	5.50

Note ^b All figures have been compiled from the *NWP&O Quarterly Pubs Rpt* and the *UP Quarterly Pubs Rpt* for the years indicated. All percentages have been calculated to the nearest 0.1%; rounding off means that the total percentages for separate Hindu-heritage languages will not always exactly equal that for Hindu-heritage languages as whole. The column labelled 'Hindi-Sanskrit' includes both Hindi-Sanskrit and Sanskrit-Hindi works. The category 'Other' includes English as well as several languages such as Nepali, Marathi, and Bengali, and several dual-language combinations such as Sanskrit-Nepali and Sanskrit-Prakrit. The combination of English and other languages in 'Other' due to limitations of space obscures two rather different patterns. The numbers and percentages of English fluctuated unevenly, while those of the other languages grew steadily and at a rate roughly twice that of the grand total of all languages.

difficulties of procuring copies of each work for the compiling officials resulted in the exclusion of legitimate titles. Hence one must use these reports with some caution, often resting content with what they reveal of general trends. Nevertheless, they constitute by far the most complete and detailed source for the publishing history of British India.

We will focus on what this source reveals about publishing in the NWP&O, since this province was the heart of the Hindi movement, the centre of the Hindi-Urdu controversy, and the chief producer of Hindi works. During the period 1868–1925, the production of books and periodicals in the various languages of the province showed differing patterns of growth or decline. As Table 1 shows, the total production increased about 5.5 times (the most rapid increases occurring after 1900) which provides a rough measure of the performance of individual languages or groups of languages.

The two major groups of languages, Hindu-heritage and Islamic-heritage, fared rather differently. The former grew a little more slowly than average until about 1900, and then expanded much more rapidly, while the latter grew a little faster than average in the earlier period, and then declined precipitously. By 1925, Hindu-heritage languages had increased their share from one-half or less to slightly more than three-quarters of the total. In the meantime Islamic-heritage languages had decreased from nearly one-half at one point to about one-eighth. The total of other languages, including English, maintained a roughly constant proportion of production.

Throughout our period the two chief languages of publication, Hindi and Urdu, together accounted for somewhere between 65 and 75 per cent of the total, but their relationship changed dramatically. In 1900, as in 1884, the number of Urdu works published equalled nearly three-quarters of the number of Hindi works, and accounted for close to 30 per cent of the grand total. By 1925, however, the number of Urdu publications had shrunk to one-sixth the number of Hindi, and made up only 11 per cent of the grand total. Moreover, Urdu works had actually declined in absolute numbers to a level below that of 1900. In striking contrast, Hindi works quadrupled in number between 1900 and 1925, and grew from 40 and 66 per cent of the grand total.

Relationships among Hindu-heritage languages themselves underwent less striking changes. While Hindi works accounted for the great majority throughout our period, their proportion declined somewhat, mainly due to the rapidly increasing number of dual language works in Sanskrit-Hindi or Hindi-Sanskrit. Since many of both combinations

dealt with religion, the evidence suggests numbers of writers increasingly used the vernacular, Hindi, to popularize the Hindu religious tradition in the classical language, Sanskrit. These dual-language texts multiplied at a greater rate than any other language or language combination. By 1925 they ranked third after Hindi and Urdu in absolute numbers.

Relationships among Islamic-heritage languages showed more remarkable changes. Until approximately the turn of the century, Persian and Urdu between them accounted for the great majority of works in this category. Thereafter the number of publications in Persian fell precipitously until composing only a tiny fraction of Islamic languages works in 1925. The number of Arabic publications shrank almost as drastically. By 1925 the two classical languages combined accounted for less than 0.5 per cent of total publications as opposed to over 13 per cent in 1884. Dual language Arabic and Urdu works showed more stability, maintaining a slightly varying proportion of Islamic works for most of our period. Many of these, like their dual language Sanskrit and Hindi counterparts, dealt with religious themes, suggesting a similar though less marked increase in the use of the vernacular to popularize works in the classical language.

Another trend of considerable importance deserves mention: throughout our period educational works—grammars, language primers, etc.—made up a significant proportion of publishing totals, especially of those works published in large numbers. Thus in 1868, nine works appeared in 10,000 or more copies (for a total of 221,000) in Oudh and the NWP; all but 30,000 of these appeared in Hindi or Nagari, and the majority of them fell into the category of educational works printed by the government. The greatest number printed for any single work, 100,000, was for a Hindi primer teaching the Nagari alphabet. In 1914, thirty-four works appeared in 10,000 or more copies (for a total of 465,000) in the UP; all but 40,000 of these appeared in Hindi (295,000) or Urdu (130,000), and the majority of them (385,000) came under the category of educational works. The production of school texts became a lucrative business: a significant proportion of the income of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha in its earlier years, for example, was earned through the creation of such texts. These facts show the importance of publishing, especially school texts, in the social mobilization of potential supporters' of Hindi.⁶⁶

Patterns of Publishing: Geographical

Publishing in the United Provinces (NWP&O) displayed a high degree of concentration. (See Table 2.) Throughout our period, six cities—

Banaras, Allahabad, Lucknow, Aligarh, Agra and Kanpur—accounted for about 80 per cent of the total production. Three of these cities in the eastern portion of the province—Banaras, Allahabad, and Lucknow—usually accounted for over 60 per cent of all publications. One of these—Banaras—showed much higher growth than any of the others, accounting for a third of all works published in the province in 1925.

Statistics for the chief languages of publication in these cities show some significant trends. (See Table 2.) Certain cities dominated the production of works in various languages much of the time. Lucknow usually outranked any other city in the publication of Islamic-heritage language works, whether Arabic, Persian or Urdu. Banaras soon became the leader in Sanskrit, and eventually surpassed Allahabad in Hindi and in dual-language Hindi-Sanskrit or Sanskrit-Hindi works. In all six cities, the proportion of Urdu works declined very substantially between 1868 and 1925, though at different rates, and in four of them the absolute numbers declined as well. Only in Lucknow did Urdu hold its own, and even there Hindi had taken a slight edge by 1925. In contrast, the proportion of Hindi works increased in five of the six cities, and in all of them the absolute numbers increased also, sometimes by enormous amounts.

During the same period significant changes also occurred in the regional distribution of Hindi and Urdu works. (See Table 3.) In the eastern NWP⁶⁷ Hindi works held a commanding lead from the beginning, while the proportion of Urdu works gradually declined. In Oudh Urdu maintained a marked advantage, and even by 1925 lagged only slightly behind Hindi. The greatest change took place in the western NWP⁶⁸ where up to 1900, as in Oudh, Urdu usually held the lead over Hindi. Between 1900 and 1914 the balance shifted decisively in favour of Hindi, and by 1925 Hindi works outnumbered Urdu by more than six to one. In terms of absolute numbers, only Oudh showed a continuing increase in Urdu publications between 1868 and 1925; in both the eastern and western portions of the NWP the numbers shrank to less than half their 1900 levels. In short, these statistics suggest a picture of an increasing tide of Hindi works from the east pushing a diminishing flow of Urdu works back into the west with Oudh slowly but inexorably being submerged.

Some incomplete statistics for journalism (see Table 4) give us a similar picture, but with a few important differences. During the period 1869 to 1900 (no figures were available for 1914 and 1925) the numbers for newspaper circulation in the province showed the dominance of

TABLE 2
Trends in the Growth Rate of Publications in Various Languages in Selected Cities
of the United Provinces between 1868 and 1925

Year	Hindi	Sanskrit	H-S/S-H	Urdu	Persian	Arabic	Total
Banaras							
1868	9,400 (22.0)	1,000 (2.3)	1,000 (2.3)	20,800 (48.7)	—	—	42,275 [5.0]
1884	121,053 (69.3)	15,350 (8.8)	1,500 (0.9)	15,250 (8.7)	—	—	174,778 [16.9]
1900	67,300 (42.3)	28,200 (17.7)	2,750 (1.7)	4,000 (2.5)	—	—	159,050 [8.4]
1914	474,240 (72.5)	30,550 (4.7)	56,010 (8.6)	47,550 (7.3)	—	—	654,402 [19.3]
1925	1,154,500 (73.6)	102,900 (6.6)	104,116 (6.6)	6,000 (0.4)	—	—	1,569,026 [33.5]
Allahabad							
1868	233,085 (69.7)	100 (0.0)	—	55,613 (16.6)	—	—	334,458 [39.3]
1884	58,490 (60.7)	4,000 (4.2)	2,000 (2.1)	20,100 (20.8)	—	—	96,440 [9.3]
1900	386,350 (63.4)	3,500 (0.6)	6,000 (1.0)	95,950 (15.7)	2,300 (0.4)	1,800 (0.3)	609,548 [32.3]
1914	306,050 (50.9)	7,000 (1.2)	26,500 (4.4)	60,500 (10.1)	500 (0.1)	500 (0.1)	601,460 [17.7]
1925	484,910 (63.5)	—	69,600 (9.1)	37,400 (4.9)	2,200 (0.3)	1,000 (0.1)	763,630 [16.3]
Lucknow							
1868	54,650 (27.4)	—	—	69,200 (34.7)	50,124 (25.2)	15,450 (7.8)	199,224 [23.4]
1884	120,000 (34.2)	—	7,200 (2.0)	122,515 (34.9)	24,301 (6.9)	17,100 (4.9)	351,266 [34.0]
1900	111,125 (23.8)	17,050 (3.7)	14,450 (3.1)	176,150 (37.7)	41,000 (8.8)	22,850 (4.9)	467,300 [24.8]
1914	171,025 (27.5)	4,000 (0.6)	22,700 (3.6)	232,125 (37.3)	10,875 (1.8)	1,500 (0.2)	622,825 [18.3]
1925	273,240 (44.2)	2,000 (0.3)	23,500 (3.8)	267,965 (43.4)	4,600 (0.7)	1,500 (0.2)	617,730 [13.2]

(contd.)

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Table 2 (Continued)

Year	Hindi	Sanskrit	H-S/S-H	Urdu	Persian	Arabic	Total
Aligarh							
1868	—	—	—	1,000 (100.0)	—	—	1,000 [0.1]
1884	500 (33.5)	—	—	991 (66.5)	—	—	1,491 [0.1]
1900	8,500 (30.6)	—	—	18,750 (67.6)	—	—	27,750 [1.5]
1914	292,266 (58.4)	2,000 (0.4)	5,100 (1.0)	168,560 (33.7)	—	—	500,826 [14.2]
1925	272,450 (78.4)	—	21,050 (6.1)	31,475 (9.1)	2,000 (0.6)	500 (0.1)	347,575 [7.4]
Agra							
1868	74,350 (55.5)	5,500 (4.1)	8,700 (6.5)	18,975 (14.2)	3,400 (2.5)	—	133,934 [15.7]
1884	12,350 (25.2)	—	4,300 (8.8)	11,720 (24.0)	5,200 (10.6)	—	48,915 [4.7]
1900	33,850 (33.1)	—	1,000 (1.0)	44,310 (43.4)	4,300 (4.2)	250 (0.2)	102,210 [5.4]
1914	43,500 (52.4)	—	4,500 (5.4)	22,000 (26.5)	—	—	83,000 [2.4]
1925	219,140 (66.7)	200 (0.1)	23,500 (7.2)	15,600 (4.8)	—	—	328,401 [7.0]
Kanpur							
1868	5,000 (8.9)	—	—	24,950 (44.5)	16,750 (29.9)	6,100 (10.9)	56,050 [6.6]
1884	—	—	—	47,450 (29.0)	68,900 (42.0)	9,700 (5.9)	163,900 [15.9]
1900	54,025 (23.0)	2,000 (0.8)	9,200 (3.9)	99,885 (42.5)	24,305 (10.3)	10,450 (4.4)	235,300 [12.5]
1914	226,085 (71.9)	2,000 (0.6)	17,500 (5.6)	44,965 (14.3)	7,100 (2.3)	—	314,300 [9.2]
1925	227,950 (94.6)	1,000 (0.4)	5,500 (2.3)	5,000 (2.1)	—	—	240,950 [5.2]

Note: All figures have been compiled from the *Quarterly Publications Reports*. Numbers in parentheses = percentages of total publications of the city; numbers in brackets = percentages of total publications in the province for the year. The totals of the separate languages do not equal 'Total' since several languages or language combinations—e.g., English, Urdu-Persian, etc.—have been omitted. H-S = Hindi-Sanskrit and S-H = Sanskrit-Hindi.

TABLE 3
Proportions of Hindi and Urdu Publications
in Three Regions of the United Provinces
between 1868 and 1925

Year	Eastern NWP		Western NWP		Oudh	
	Urdu	Hindi	Urdu	Hindi	Urdu	Hindi
1868	76,413 (20.2) 377,433	242,485 (64.2)	71,535 (26.1) 274,334	94,875 (34.6)	69,205 (34.7) 199,537	54,956 (27.5)
1884	36,775 (13.4) 273,643	179,543 (65.6)	122,321 (30.3) 404,215	92,439 (22.9)	125,415 (35.3) 355,066	120,900 (34.1)
1900	102,650 (13.1) 782,170	459,752 (58.8)	262,405 (41.9) 626,110	186,615 (29.8)	182,975 (38.2) 478,625	112,625 (23.5)
1914	113,550 (7.3) 1,301,162	813,790 (62.5)	331,905 (22.7) 1,460,976	883,611 (60.5)	243,050 (38.2) 636,750	171,525 (26.9)
1925	75,400 (3.0) 2,504,156	1,727,910 (69.0)	168,370 (11.0) 1,533,422	1,058,991 (69.1)	269,315 (42.0) 641,280	291,340 (45.4)

Note: All figures have been compiled from the *Quarterly Publications Reports*. The figures in parentheses represent the percentages of the total publications in *all* languages for the region concerned. All percentages have been calculated to the nearest 0.1 per cent. Thus in 1900, for example, 13.1 per cent or 102,650 of the publications in all languages in the eastern NWP were in Urdu. The single figure immediately below the two percentages for each region represents the total publications for that region. The sum of the three regional totals will be found to tally exactly with the corresponding Grand Total for the entire province in Table 1.

Hindi in the eastern NWP, the equal ascendancy of Urdu in the western NWP, and the complete hegemony of Urdu in Oudh. Overall Urdu maintained a commanding lead throughout this period, but Hindi had begun to gain ground rapidly by the turn of the century. Imperfect and

TABLE 4
Newspaper Circulation in Various Vernaculars
in the United Provinces
from 1869 to 1900

Region and Language	1869	1884	1900
EASTERN NWP			
Hindi	229(10.7)	4,420(45.3)	16,250(72.5)
Urdu	356(16.6)	2,688(27.6)	5,680(24.9)
Hindi-Urdu	1,250(58.2)	2,640(27.1)	—
Other	314(14.6)	—	600 (2.6)
Total	2,149	9,748	22,800
WESTERN NWP			
Hindi	1,164(10.8)	1,092 (4.7)	9,164(21.1)
Urdu	8,958(83.4)	21,781(93.0)	33,651(77.4)
Hindi-Urdu	615 (5.7)	—	450 (1.0)
Other	—	540 (2.3)	200 (0.5)
Total	10,737	23,413	43,465
ODUH			
Urdu	—	26,765	27,780
TOTAL			
	12,886	59,926	94,045
Hindi	1,393(10.8)	5,512 (9.2)	25,684(27.3)
Urdu	9,314(72.3)	51,234(85.5)	67,111(71.4)

Note: All figures were compiled from the monthly or quarterly reports of circulation in *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers* for March 1869, April 1884, and January 1900 respectively. Figures in parentheses represent percentages of regional or overall totals.

partial as the data are, they still clearly display the gradual rise of a subordinate Hindi vis-a-vis Urdu, a rise which paralleled that in publishing, though lagging several decades behind.

One other interesting piece of evidence, though not directly related to publishing, gives us an idea of the relative strength of Hindi and Urdu among literate citizens of the NWP&O in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. (See Table 5.) For a few years in the mid-1870s, the annual provincial post office reports included statistics on the number of Hindi, Urdu, and English letters sent through imperial and district post offices for selected periods. The proportions of letters in the three

TABLE 5
Numbers of Non-official Letters in Hindi, Urdu, and
English Received in District and Imperial Post Offices
in the NWP&O in the Second Week of December 1875

	Number	Percentage
Hindi	82,206	(33.2%)
Urdu	99,905	(40.3%)
English	65,719	(26.5%)
Total	247,830	(100.0%)

Source: NWP Gen Dept Progs, August 1876, pp. 27-35.

languages show little variation from one report to the next, so one period will do as well as another. The picture that emerges shows a slightly dominant Urdu, Hindi a close second, and English a more distant third. To look at the matter another way, the number of Hindi letters sent equalled more than 80 per cent of the number of Urdu letters sent. Given the roughly equal number of literate Hindus and Muslims in the population and assuming an equal propensity to communicate through letters, we can surmise that while a significant fraction of educated Hindus used Urdu to correspond, a much larger proportion of them used Hindi.

Conclusion

Throughout the nineteenth century the twin processes of assimilation and differentiation manifested through the development of various media in Hindi and Urdu. Assimilation outstripped differentiation *within* the Hindi tradition. Nagari became the dominant script (see Chapter III) and Khari Boli the dominant regional standard in prose and poetry. Differentiation outpaced assimilation, however, *between* Hindi and Urdu. Neither side accepted the script of the other, nor was any assimilation possible here. And neither side accepted the classical language sources for vocabulary of the other though here assimilation was possible.

Since the underlying population of Hindus far exceeded that of Muslims, as mobilization proceeded apace during the course of the century, increasing numbers of Hindus turned toward Hindi for cultural, political, and economic reasons. In Brass's terms, an increasingly self-conscious community, the second level in the transition between an

ethnic group and a nationality, began to emerge. The reflection of this process in the various media meant that Hindi publications and newspaper circulation steadily increased and eventually ousted Urdu from its former influential if not dominant position. To put the matter another way, the number of Hindus in the equation Urdu = Muslim + Hindu began to shrink while the number of Hindus in the equation Hindi = Hindu began to expand. In different media this process proceeded at different paces: the publishing industry showed the most rapid advance of Hindi; the postal services, the very incomplete evidence suggests, witnessed slower progress; the world of journalism exhibited the slowest change of all.

The process of multi-symbol congruence by which Hindi and Hindu became more closely identified took place at different speeds not only in different media, but also in different geographical areas. In the publishing industry, for example, Hindi enjoyed an early superiority in the eastern NWP, but did not reach the same position in the western NWP until the 1910s, and barely pulled abreast of Urdu in Oudh by the mid-1920s. A similar, though more slowly developing pattern, characterized the growth of newspaper circulation. As we shall see in the next chapter, the same picture of a more Hindi east, a more Urdu west, and a chiefly Urdu Oudh typified the development of education.

Finally, another aspect of the process of multi-symbol congruence deserves attention, namely, the existence of a number of potential symbols within the Hindi tradition. At least three contentious issues showed that unanimity did not prevail among Hindi supporters: the Kaithi script, better established than the Nagari in much of the NWP&O and in Bihar, posed a major challenge (see Chapter III); the Braj Bhasha poetic tradition presented an even greater challenge as we have seen; and the matter of the proper language style for Khari Boli Hindi stimulated a great deal of controversy. In short, part of the process of multi-symbol congruence involves the selection of sub-symbols for the master symbols. Which Hindi? Khari Boli for the present and future, but also Braj Bhasha and Avadhi for the past. Which script? The Nagari, though less well-established, and not the Kaithi. Which style? A more Sanskritized style for some, a less Sanskritized style for others. The master symbol 'Hindi' evolved from a complex and often opposing set of sub-symbols.

NOTES

1. Ramchandra Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya kā Itihās* [The History of Hindi Literature] (Kāsi, 1968), p. 419, quoting Raja Lakshman Singh from the introduction to his prose translation of a Sanskrit work, *Raghuvāṣa*. Translation mine.
2. Amrit Rai, *A House Divided: The Origin and Development of Hindi/Hindavi* (Delhi, 1984).
3. Some students of Hindi literature claim Dakani as part of the Hindi literary heritage. See Chapter 4, 'The Language called Dakani', in Rai, *A House Divided*, for a thorough discussion of scholarly opinions on this language.
4. Muhammad Sadiq, *A History of Urdu Literature* (London, 1964), pp. 45–51; S. K. Chatterji, *Indo-Aryan and Hindi*, 2nd edition (Calcutta, 1960), pp. 205–7. See also Rai, *A House Divided*, Chapter 4.
5. Chatterji, *Indo-Aryan*, pp. 205–7; Rai, *A House Divided*, Chapter 4, *passim*; Sadiq, *A History*, pp. 45–51.
6. Chatterji, *Indo-Aryan*, pp. 207–8, 210–11; S. N. Faridi, *S. N. Faridi Presents Hindu History of Urdu Literature* (Agra, 1966), *passim*; S. S. Narula, *Scientific History of the Hindi Language* (Delhi, 1955), p. 81; Rai, *A House Divided*, Chapters 5 and 6; Sadiq, *A History*, pp. 53–65, 64–144 *passim*.
7. Rai, *A House Divided*, Chapters 5 and 6; Ram Babu Saksena, *A History of Urdu Literature* (Allahabad, 1940), pp. 5–6, 240–1.
8. R. A. Dwivedi, *A Critical Survey of Hindi Literature* (Delhi, 1966), p. 136; Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, pp. 387–98.
9. Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, pp. 390, 393. Translation mine.
10. David Kopf, *British Orientalism and Bengal Renaissance: the Dynamics of Indian Modernization, 1773–1835* (Berkeley, 1969), pp. 47–8.
11. T. W. Clark, 'The Languages of Calcutta, 1760–1840', London University, School of Oriental and African Studies, *Bulletin*, XVIII (1956), pp. 459–60; Atique M. Siddiqi, *Origins of Modern Hindustani Literature: Source Material: Gilchrist Letters* (Aligarh, 1963), pp. 34–5.
12. Sayyid 'Abdul' I-Latif, *The Influence of English Literature on Urdu Literature* (London, 1924), p. 27; Krishna Kripalanai, *Modern Indian Literature: A Panoramic Glimpse* (Bombay, 1968), p. 36.
13. Siddiqi, *Origins*, pp. 19–31, 34–42, 155; Priyaranjan Sen, 'Hindi in the College of Fort William', *Calcutta Review*, LIX (April–June 1936) 142–3; Gilchrist, *The Hindee Roman Orthographic Ultimatum* (London, 1820), p. 52.
14. Siddiqi, *Origins*, pp. 63–4, quoting Gilchrist, *Appendix* (Calcutta, 1798), n.p.
15. Shardadevi Vedalkar, *The Development of Hindi Prose Literature in the Early Nineteenth Century (1800–1856 A.D.)* (Allahabad, 1969), p. 51, quoting a letter of Price from *Bengal Public Consultations*, Fort William, 11 October 1824.
16. Sisir Kumar Das, *Sahibs and Munshis: An Account of the College of Fort William* (Calcutta, 1978), pp. 46–56; Kopf, *British Orientalism*, pp. 165–6, 217–19; Siddiqi, *Origins*, pp. 103, 105, 159–60; Vedalkar, *The Development of Hindi*, pp. 36–7, 41–2, 52 n. 61.
17. Sir George Abraham Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India* (Calcutta, 1903–28),

- IX, Part 1, pp. 35–6; Vedalankar, *The Development of Hindi*, 64–8; Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, 398–400.
18. In the case of these two works I have kept the contemporary spelling.
 19. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey*, IX, Part 1, pp. 30–1, 35–6.
 20. Vedalankar, *The Development of Hindi*, p. 59. The term 'Bihari' includes three different regional standards of Hindi spoken in Bihar, namely, Bhojpuri (also spoken in Uttar Pradesh), Magahi or Magadhi, and Maithili. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey*, V, Part 2, p. 4.
 21. Dwivedi, *A Critical Survey*, p. 316; Grierson, *Linguistic Survey*, IX, Part 1, p. 39; Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, p. 397; Vedalankar, *The Development of Hindi*, pp. 72–4.
 22. Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, pp. 394–5.
 23. Murshidabad was the capital of the Muslim governors of Bengal until the advent of British rule.
 24. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey*, IX, Part 1, p. 39; Sadiq, *A History*, pp. 125–30; Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, p. 397.
 25. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey*, IX, Part 1, p. 46.
 26. Dwivedi, *A Critical Survey*, 136–7; Vedalankar, *The Development of Hindi*, pp. 84–121, 127–39, 149–62. While a few newspapers in the Nagari script began to appear by the 1820s, their language was Urdu as often as not. (Vedalankar, *The Development of Hindi*, pp. 166–87). In general, Urdu journalism developed sooner and maintained a substantial lead over Hindi journalism well into the twentieth century.
 27. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey*, IX, p. 48.
 28. Ibid.
 29. Shitikanth Mishra, *Kharībolī kā Āndolan [The Khari Boli Movement]* (Kāśī, 1956), pp. 159–74.
 30. R. S. McGregor, *Hindi Literature of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (Wiesbaden, 1974), pp. 71, 73.
 31. Dwivedi, *A Critical Survey*, pp. 175–7.
 32. Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, p. 419, quoting Singh. My translation.
 33. Narula, *Scientific History*, p. 82, n. 3; *The Pioneer* (Allahabad), 21 May 1870, p. 4; Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, p. 409.
 34. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1867–68, p. 32.
 35. Shiva Prasad, *Memorandum: Court Characters, in the Upper Provinces of India* (Banaras, 1868), pp. 5–6.
 36. Shyam Sundar Das, *Merī Ātmakahānī [The Story of My Life]* (Prayāg, 1957) p. 22; Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, pp. 416–18.
 37. So popular were Khatri's works that versions of his novels appeared in Urdu also. See *NWPE&O Quarterly Pubs Rpt* for the period 1900–1920 *passim*.
 38. See the Glossary for the meaning of this term.
 39. Shri Durga Prasad Khatri (son of Devki Nandan Khatri), Interview, Banaras, 29 October 1971; *UP Admin Rpt*, 1914–15, p. 72. See also T. W. Clark, editor, *The Novel in India: Its Birth and Development* (Berkeley, 1970), especially the chapters on the Hindi novel by R. S. McGregor and on the Urdu novel by R. Russell.
 40. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey*, IX, pp. 48, 138; Sadiq, *A History*, pp. 316–44.

41. Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, pp. 441–3.
42. Dwivedi, *A Critical Survey*, pp. 162–3; Jurgen Lütt, *Hindu-Nationalismus in Uttar Pradesh 1867–1900* (Stuttgart, 1970), pp. 65–98; Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, pp. 438–43.
43. The few exceptions, written in Khari Boli, included works celebrating a visit of the Prince of Wales to India, the victory of British Indian troops in Egypt, and the lyrics of some popular songs. Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, pp. 564–6.
44. Ibid, pp. 564–6; *Up Educ Progs*, May 1903, p. 33.
45. Mishra, *Kharībolī kā Āndolan*, pp. 158, 179.
46. Ibid, pp. 158, 166, 174–5, 179.
47. The description of the controversy which follows has been drawn mainly from Mishra, *Kharī Bolī kā Āndolan*, pp. 175–83.
48. Ibid; Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, pp. 436, 559.
49. For numerous examples of nationalistic themes expressed in Khari Boli Hindi poetry, see Dharam Paul Sarin, *Influence of Political Movements on Hindi Literature (1906–1947)* (Chandigarh, 1967).
50. Mishra, *Kharī Bolī kā Āndolan*, p. 211; Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, p. 583.
51. Mishra, *Kharī Bolī kā Āndolan*, p. 211; Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, p. 384.
52. Dwivedi, *A Critical Survey*, pp. 150, 166, 179–80, 185; Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, p. 585.
53. An important part of their efforts consisted in the moral condemnation of a large body of highly erotic poetry written chiefly in Braj, and focusing on the voluptuous charms of the female sex. For example, in 1901 Dwivedi authored an article in *Saraswatī* in which he pleaded for an immediate stop to the composition of such works and the proscription of those already existing. See Rakesh Gupta, 'The Nayaka-Nayika-Bheda Sahitya of Hindi', *Hindī Review* (Varanasi), II, 3 (April 1957), pp. 102–9.
54. *Pratham Hindī-Sāhitya-Sammelan, Kāfī, Kāryavivaran—Dūsarā Bhāg* [*The First Hindī-Sāhitya-Sammelan, Kasbi, Report—Second Part*] (Prayāg, 1910), pp. 27–33, 57–9; Mishra, *Kharī Bolī kā Āndolan*, pp. 224–5.
55. *Dvītīya Hindī-Sāhitya-Sammelan, Prayāg, Kāryavivaran—Dūsarā Bhāg* [*The Second Hindī-Sāhitya-Sammelan, Prayag, Report—Second Part*], 2nd edition (Allahabad, [1925]), pp. 228, 233.
56. Mishra, *Kharī Bolī kā Āndolan*, p. 225.
57. Ibid, pp. 228–9.
58. Ibid, pp. 233–6.
59. Dwivedi, *A Critical Survey*, pp. 181–204.
60. The North-western Provinces and Oudh became the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh in 1902.
61. *UP SVN* 1913, p. 1254.
62. Dwivedi, *A Critical Survey*, p. 185; Mishra, *Kharī Bolī kā Āndolan*, p. 235; Narula, *Scientific History*, pp. 97–8.
63. See the section of Chapter I entitled 'Linguistic and Social Background' for descriptions of the regional standards.
64. Mishra, *Kharī Bolī kā Āndolan*, p. 323. See also Christopher R. King 'Forging a New Linguistic Identity: The Hindi Movement in Banaras, 1868–1914', in

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- Sandria B. Freitag, editor, *Culture and Power in Banaras: Community Performance, and Environment, 1800–1980* (Berkeley, 1989), especially pp. 190–2.
65. Govind Narain, *Munshi Prem Chand* (Boston, 1978), chapters 2 and 3, *passim*. See also Amrit Rai, *Premchand: Kalam kā Sipāhī* [*Soldier of the Pen*], (Allahabad, 1962), and Madan Gopal, 'What Price Premchand?' *The Statesman Weekly*, (7 July 1984), p. 12.
66. See King, *The Nagari Pracharini Sabha*, pp. 207, 210, 273–82, 452–4.
67. Eastern NWP here means all those districts east of a north–south line drawn through the eastern boundary of Kanpur district.
68. Western NWP here means all those districts west of a north–south line drawn through the eastern boundary of Kanpur district.

CHAPTER III

Government Language Policy

It is highly important that justice should be administered in a language familiar to the judge, but it is of no less importance that it should be administered in a language familiar . . . to the people at large; and it is easier for the judge to acquire the language of the people than for the people to acquire the language of the judge.¹

Introduction

The linguistic history of North India showed a remarkable continuity in the area of administration for several centuries before British rule. Muslim rule brought Persian as the official language and the chief vehicle of culture in Muslim courts. During the eighteenth century the prestige of Persian continued unabated despite the rapid decline of the Mughal Empire. As the British East India Company rose to power, Persian remained the official language of administration well into the nineteenth century.

British dominion, however, eventually brought about significant linguistic changes. In the 1830s English took the place of Persian on the higher levels of administration, and Indian vernaculars on the lower. In much of north India, Hindustani (i.e., Urdu) in the Persian script² became the official vernacular, while Hindi and the Nagari script failed to reach a similar status, except for a few isolated instances, until late in the century. In the 1870s and 1880s Hindi, in turn, began to replace Urdu in the Central Provinces and Bihar, and by 1900 in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh. In the Punjab, however, which came under British control in the late 1840s, Urdu dominated the vernacular level of administration throughout the century and well into the next.

In the gradual process of linguistic change, a complex set of relationships developed among the language attitudes of the British and the Indians, British language policy, Indian reactions to that policy, Indian initiatives towards that policy, and British reactions to Indian reactions and initiatives. This chapter emphasizes the British contribution, while Chapter V emphasizes the Indian role. Although both were parts of a single process, convenience dictates their partial separation for analytical purposes.

The British contribution displayed several noteworthy features. British attitudes towards Indian languages did not form a monolithic whole, but rather, often showed ignorance, inconsistencies, and contradictions. Different officials often had widely differing views. All this was reflected in inconsistent and even contradictory policies. Moreover, the enforcement of these policies fluctuated, depending on the zeal of the enforcing officer and the strength of Indian resistance or support. In the various memoranda, circulars, despatches, letters, and reports dealing with language policy, one finds many of the same arguments and counter-arguments turning up again and again. In short, British language policy during our period resembled a choked and tangled maze with a bewildering variety of paths, that must be approached with care.

Yet the very inconsistencies and contradictions of British language policy not only reflected a complex and confusing situation, but also served to accelerate important changes. This policy intensified the underlying differentiation between the two great religious groups of north India, Hindus and Muslims, by supporting an educational system¹ that encouraged two different styles of the same linguistic continuum, Hindi-Urdu.⁴ Moreover, this policy fostered a Hindi-speaking elite by providing Hindi speakers with employment in the educational system, and simultaneously favoured an Urdu-speaking elite by retaining Urdu as the only official vernacular for many years. British officials attempted to shape the objective characteristic⁵ of language, though with little success, by experimenting with scripts and regulating styles. Like a well-meaning but confused midwife, British language policy assisted in the birth of a community from an ethnic group⁶ as the Hindi movement developed.

The Replacement of Persian

The liberal sentiments expressed by the Court of Directors of the East India Company in the opening quotation furnished one motive for considering the replacement of Persian. The concern of the Directors to effect economies in the administration of justice supplied another.⁷ In the Presidencies of Bombay and Madras, English and Indian vernaculars had replaced Persian by 1832.⁸ In the Presidency of Bengal a lengthy inquiry resulted in Act XXIX of 1837, which gave the Governor-General the power to dispense with any regulation of the Bengal Code requiring the use of Persian for judicial or revenue proceedings, and to prescribe any other language and script as a replacement.⁹

The officials involved in this inquiry expressed a wide range of

opinions favouring or opposing various languages and scripts. These included: Persian and the Persian script, a modified form of which served as the script for Hindustani; Hindustani, i.e., Urdu; Hindi and the Nagari script; English and the Roman script; and Bengali and the Bengali script. Their arguments, several of which appeared over and over again in the course of future controversies, fell into two broad categories: technical and administrative, and social and linguistic.¹⁰

Under the first category, the issues of standardization and efficiency drew special attention. The Sadar Court¹¹ of Bengal, for example, pointed out that a multiplicity of dialects rendered Bengali unfit to be a court language; the Court would require as many readers as dialects. Moreover, to record judicial proceedings in Bengali or Hindi would take at least a third more time than in Persian, the Court asserted, presumably because of their supposedly more slowly written scripts.¹² The Sadar Court of the North-Western Provinces echoed this reasoning: Hindustani in the Nagari script had a great variety of dialects, differing from district to district and sometimes even within a single district, and hence was unsuitable for a court language.¹³ Moreover, the Nagari script was also disqualified as a court script because of slowness in writing and extreme difficulty in reading.¹⁴ Another critic called Nagari 'crabbed and impracticable', and even a proponent had to admit that the script showed variations in the form of some letters and that different forms were used in different provinces.¹⁵ The Kaithi script received an even harsher appraisal from the same critic, who noted that people wrote this cursive form of the Nagari so irregularly that 'you shall rarely find two hands agree'.¹⁶

None of the officials involved in the inquiry, not even those who advocated the introduction of other languages, disparaged Persian as unstandardized or inefficient. Had technical advantages and administrative convenience been the primary consideration, Persian might well have remained the official language for an indefinite period. Indeed some officials urged the retention of the status quo for social and linguistic reasons. They contended that most respectable Muslims understood Persian as did many among the higher classes of Hindus. Moreover, many people depended on their proficiency in this language to earn their living, and to change the official language would throw them into poverty. In addition, Persian had spread more widely over Bengal Presidency than any other language. Should the government introduce English as a substitute, these officials continued, to find enough persons to conduct judicial business would prove impossible.

Finally, while having no more claim to be indigenous than English, Persian had mingled with the languages of India and become prevalent through centuries of use, something English could not hope to achieve for a very long time.¹⁷

The few officials who argued for English assumed that the full benefits of British rule could not be enjoyed by the general public until it had become sufficiently acquainted with English. One of them proposed a measure which, applied to various languages and scripts, proved to be a basic instrument of British language policy: let knowledge of English be made an essential condition of public service after a suitable lapse of time, and all those classes who looked to government or law for their livelihood would begin the study of English.¹⁸ Another official favoured the introduction of the Roman script for the vernaculars: this would not only help to naturalize English but would also aid Europeans to read Indian languages more easily.¹⁹

Those officials who favoured the introduction of the vernaculars placed the greatest emphasis on social and linguistic reasons.²⁰ Many of them, including Sir Charles Metcalfe, Lieutenant-Governor of the NWP, believed that the language of the people should be the language of the courts. Though their opinions varied as to which vernacular and which script should be used in different areas of north India, all agreed that the convenience of the people outweighed the convenience of their rulers.²¹ One of the clearest statements of the utilitarian principle guiding those who endorsed the vernaculars came, ironically, from an advocate of Persian, Judge Morris of the Patna City Court. Should Persian be done away with, he wrote, the choice would lie between Urdu in the Persian script or Hindi in the Nagari or Kaithi script. In that case, the government should adopt Hindi 'upon the principle of studying the convenience of the *larger body* of the people'.²²

Let us pause at this point to examine the validity of some of these arguments and to reflect on their implications. The claim that the Nagari script could be written only slowly persisted for many decades, and provoked leaders of the Hindi movement to frequent assertions and occasional demonstrations to the contrary. Yet administrative experience had shown (in the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories and in the hill districts of the NWP)²³ that Nagari could function adequately as an official script, whatever its precise speed of writing. Those who criticized the vernaculars for their variety of dialects, while correct, had overlooked the obvious truth that one of the most powerful incentives toward standardization would be the status of official language. Those who

argued that the replacement of Persian would throw numbers of Indian officials out of work correctly perceived the relationship between jealously protected language skills and government service. Yet once again, experience had shown (in the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories)²⁴ that where the government took a firm stand on language requirements, those classes with a vested interest in government service would eventually comply.

Another feature of the inquiry deserves special consideration, namely, the obvious assumption by many officials that language and script had no necessary connection. Thus some officials proposed that Hindustani (i.e., Urdu) in the Persian script become the official vernacular, while others supported Hindustani in the Nagari script. From a technical linguistic viewpoint they were largely correct: one can write Urdu in the Nagari or Roman scripts, and Hindi in the Persian or Roman with the addition of a few diacriticals or other special symbols. But as the controversy between Hindi and Urdu developed, Hindi and Urdu partisans increasingly identified language and script. For example, the word 'Nagari' came to refer not only to the script but also to the Hindi language.²⁵ Furthermore, the inescapable existence of two radically different scripts for the Hindi-Urdu continuum did much to render intractable the language problems of north India, while the identification of language and script further exacerbated them. Here was at least one 'objective characteristic' which could *not* be altered to suit the convenience of those who might wish to assimilate Hindi into Urdu, or Urdu into Hindi.

In the 1830s, however, these difficulties lay some decades ahead, and the replacement of Persian proceeded apace. In January of 1838, the Deputy-Governor of Bengal, having received all the powers given to the Governor-General by Act XXIX of 1837, ordered the substitution of the vernacular language for Persian in all those districts included in his jurisdiction, i.e., Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. The change was to take place gradually over the calendar year 1838.²⁶ In the North-Western Provinces the process had started even earlier. In November 1835 the Board had given permission to the Officiating Commissioner of the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories,²⁷ F. J. Shore, to introduce Hindustani (i.e., Urdu) in place of Persian²⁸ and in Kumaun (hill districts of the NWP) officials were already conducting most of their business using Hindustani in the Nagari script by 1835.²⁹ In July 1836 the Sadar (Chief) Board of Revenue issued a circular ordering the substitution of the 'Hindoostany language' (Urdu) in the Persian script for Persian as the medium of official transactions in the Revenue Department.³⁰

Indian Reactions to the Replacement of Persian

Early in 1839 nearly five hundred residents of Dacca district in eastern Bengal petitioned the government in favour of Persian and against Bengali. The petitioners (of whom nearly two hundred were Hindus and most of the rest Muslims) used arguments practically identical to those of the British officials who had supported Persian in the recent inquiry: the Bengali script varied from place to place, one line of Persian could do the work of ten lines of Bengali, the awkward written style of Bengali read more slowly than that of Persian, people from one district could not understand the dialect of those from another, no previous government had ever kept records in Bengali, Persian had spread over a wide area and did not vary from place to place, people of all classes could understand Persian when read to them, and both Hindus and Muslims wanted to keep Persian.³¹

The Sadar Court of Bengal responded quickly to the petition, softening the rigour of the earlier orders replacing Persian by issuing a resolution allowing parties in all civil and criminal courts to present their petitions and pleadings in any language they wished in districts where either Urdu or Bengali was the current language. Any document not in Persian, Urdu, or Bengali, however, had to be accompanied by a translation in one of these three languages.³² The resolution changed the effect of the earlier orders from the *replacement* of Persian by the vernaculars to the *addition* of the vernaculars to Persian.

In the same resolution and in circular orders a few months later, the Court required the authorities of districts in which Urdu was current to begin the introduction of the Nagari script. This soon brought strenuous protests from some residents of Bihar (mainly Muslims) in the form of two petitions. The first appealed to the government to continue as the protector of Islam and patron of Persian by maintaining the Persian script in Bihar. The second, representing mainly landholders and lawyers, went so far as to insinuate that the government meant to attack the Muslim faith by abolishing Persian and its script.³³ They sounded a note that was to be repeated innumerable times in the years ahead, namely, the identification of language and script with religion, part of the process of multi-symbol congruence.³⁴

In other portions of the petitions, the Biharis reiterated several of the arguments used earlier by the Dacca petitioners: one line of Persian script could do the work of ten lines of Nagari; the Nagari script varied from place to place; the disconnectedness of Hindi letters, unlike Persian, gave the reader difficulty in joining them together and led to

confusion and waste of time. More important, they noted that both Hindus and Muslims opposed the change and went on to add that the generality of Hindus, especially landholders and those concerned with the courts, understood Persian and Arabic expressions connected with their business far better than any Sanskrit phrases." Opponents of Hindi and the Nagari script were to repeat this theme of Hindu and Muslim participation in a joint culture over and over again. In other words, they advocated those tendencies towards assimilation which had led to the formation of an Urdu-speaking elite³⁶ including both religious groups, and resisted those tendencies towards differentiation which threatened to lead to the creation of an opposing language elite excluding one religious group.

These petitions stimulated the Government of India to review the question with the Government of Bengal. As a result, the Sadar Court of Bengal issued a fresh circular late in 1839 which directed the officials earlier charged to introduce the Nagari script to do so most carefully and gradually. Further pressure from the Government of India brought yet another circular early in 1840 which discouraged the introduction of the Nagari script by any judicial officer without the special sanction of the government. Correspondence between the Government of India and the Government of the North-Western Provinces on the matter, which revealed that a large majority of the judges in the latter jurisdiction preferred Urdu in the Persian script, further strengthened the government's gradually stiffening opposition to the Nagari script.³⁷

Thus the vocal opposition of both Hindus and Muslims with vested interests in the continued use of the Persian script, and the marked preference of most British officials for this script (though not the Persian language), combined to bring about the rapid disappearance of the Nagari script as a potential competitor. In the first half of the nineteenth century no organized Hindi-speaking elite existed to assert the worth of the Hindi language and the Nagari script as symbols of a Hindu community. Moreover, the Nagari script faced a rival in one of its own progeny, the Kaithi script.³⁸ Finally, one can cogently argue that Hindi, in the sense of modern Khari Boli Hindi,³⁹ had not yet come into existence. To differentiate Hindi from Urdu (and by implication Hindu from Muslim) meant among other things the deliberate creation of a new language style, '*shuddh* [pure] Hindi', or what one might call the 'Sanskritization' of Urdu. In other words, we can interpret the rise of modern Khari Boli Hindi as the creation of an objective characteristic.⁴⁰

The Nagari Script in the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories

In one area of north India an energetic British official, F. J. Shore, Officiating Commissioner of the Saugor and Nerbudda (Sagar and Narmada) Territories, succeeded in establishing Nagari as the official vernacular script for several years. Shore's success suggests that the government could easily have made Nagari the official script all over north India. His ultimate failure implies that only a highly-organized popular movement could overcome the combined influences of British preference for Urdu and the Persian script and Indian opposition to Hindi and the Nagari script. A brief glance at the history of Shore's experiment vividly illustrates some of the obstacles to the adoption of a new official script and some of the social and political implications of such a change.

As we have seen, in November 1835 Shore received permission from the Sadar Board of Revenue of the North-Western Provinces to introduce Hindustani (i.e., Urdu) in place of Persian as the official language. Although the Board's letter did not specify the script, Shore took the initiative. In a letter written a month previously to judicial and revenue officials, he had argued convincingly for the introduction of Hindustani and the Nagari script in place of Persian. Soon after receiving the Board's permission, he instructed his district officers to gradually introduce Hindustani. While the Persian script was to be kept for the meantime, Shore ordered that all court officials must learn to read and write the Nagari script. Once the officials had thus qualified themselves, the people should be encouraged to submit their petitions in the new script.⁴¹

Shore had several reasons for his new policy. In his letter he noted that prior to British rule the people of the area had conducted all their business in Hindustani and Marathi using the Nagari and Marathi scripts.⁴² British rule had introduced the Persian language and script, and filled the higher administrative posts 'with a set of harpies from the [North-Western] Provinces', to the near total exclusion of the local inhabitants. Still, even at present, he remarked, the people frequently used the Nagari script for papers and petitions to government courts and offices. To introduce Nagari would require no additional staff, for the present court officials only need be told to learn Nagari or make way for others who would. The current situation left much to be desired, Shore added, since a messenger sent into a district with an order to arrest certain people, to search their homes, or the like could do almost anything he wanted, for neither he nor anyone else for miles around

could read a single word of his order. To clinch his argument, Shore pointed out that in Kumaun most official business was conducted in Hindustani and the Nagari script without any difficulty.⁴³

In August 1836 Shore summed up the success of his efforts in a letter to the Sadar Board of Revenue. Nearly half the business of the Territories was now conducted in the Nagari script, and not a single court official had lost his position as a result. The new state of affairs delighted the public, Shore observed, which could now write its own petitions and understand papers received from the offices. The new prospects for government employment had wonderfully increased the desire for education; even the court menials had begun to learn to read. Had the Persian script been adopted—which people found much more difficult to learn and also disliked as foreign—these happy results would not have followed. Shore countered the common criticism of the Nagari script as inefficient by asserting that adequate practice would soon enable writers of the new official script to equal the speed of Persian or English writers. As for the objection that the Nagari script lacked standards for the form of letters and for spelling, Shore reported that he had drawn up and circulated a standard alphabet in consultation with knowledgeable persons, and that he was in the process of preparing a dictionary which he would publish at his own expense if necessary.⁴⁴

Shore conceded that he had not brought about these changes without opposition, not only from the court officials but also from one or two of his own officers. He and his officers had to pay constant attention to prevent the court officials from using 'the Persian idiom'.⁴⁵ Naturally enough, these officials disliked and to a man opposed the new system because their monopoly of knowledge of the Persian script had been destroyed, and they had been forced to learn a new script. Their belief that he would eventually be succeeded by an officer who would bring back the old system strengthened their resistance, Shore noted, and described some of their dilatory tactics:

I may state that for a considerable time after the permission had been given to present petitions in Nagree [Nagari], they were nevertheless all written in the Persian Character. Being surprised at this I one day questioned some respectable looking people whether they could write, and on receiving a reply that they could write Nagree very well, why they did not write their own petitions instead of paying a Petition Writer; on which I discovered that the Amlah [court officials] & Petition Writers who were connected with the former had given out that although the Language might be Oordoo [Urdu] the character must be Persian, in order to preserve their monopoly.⁴⁶

The majority of those holding government offices, Shore added, were Hindus, mostly Kayasths, who could not possibly have any 'hereditary respect of feeling' for Persian. If the government were to intimate that after a certain period of time, all of the official business of Bengal Presidency (excepting Bengal proper and Orissa) and the North-Western Provinces would be carried on in the Nagari script, such people would soon learn the new road to employment.⁴⁷

Four aspects of Shore's remarks deserve particular attention. First, the merely *permissive* use of a new script did not suffice to guarantee the replacement of the previous script; the government needed to order the *exclusive* use of the newcomer. Second, a close relationship existed between education, widely regarded by Indians as a stepping-stone to government employment, and the official language and script. Changes in government language policy were likely to be followed by changes in patterns of language study.⁴⁸ Third, many Hindus had strong economic if not cultural reasons for the maintenance of an important part of the Muslim heritage. As the Hindi movement gained momentum later in the century, and the use of Hindi and the Nagari script became increasingly identified with being Hindu, these Hindu members of the Urdu-speaking elite would find themselves in a more and more ambivalent position. On the one hand, Hindi and Nagari threatened the linguistic basis of their livelihood, exposing them to the competition of other Hindus not versed in Islamic languages. On the other hand, insofar as their membership in the Hindu community depended on recognizing the worth of Hindi and Nagari, they had to give at least lip service to this part of their Hindu heritage. Finally, the use of Urdu in the Persian script, while certainly not identical to the use of Persian in the Persian script, meant a high degree of continuity in practice. As one contemporary observer remarked, since retaining Urdu would necessitate retaining the Persian idiom for technical modes of expression and phraseology, the only noticeable changes would be different grammatical inflections and Urdu instead of Persian verbs.⁴⁹

The Sadar Board of Revenue, responding to Shore's report, noted that he had full authorization to use the Nagari script and that the Board had never considered any other script for the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories.⁵⁰ The prospects for the continued use of the Nagari script seemed bright. Yet less than a decade later, the Government of India, responding to Indian and British officials in the Territories who had been recruited from the NWP, ordered a complete reversal of language policy. These officials, who had opposed the abolition of Persian,

persuaded the supreme government to order that office papers and records be kept in Persian or Urdu, though Hindi and the Nagari script should be used for papers issued to people in the outlying districts. Eventually the latter part of this order fell into disuse, and when the Central Provinces were created from the Territories in 1861, government courts and offices in all districts used Persian and Urdu.⁵¹ The court officials who opposed Shore had won in the end.

The Persianization of Urdu

About the same time the Sadar Board sanctioned the use of the Nagari script in the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories, the same body warned against the excessive Persianization of Hindustani (i.e., Urdu). In the same circular of July 1836 which ordered the replacement of Persian by Hindustani, the Board explained that officers should avoid 'the mere substitution of Hindee verbs and affixes, while the words and idiom remain exclusively Persian'.⁵² Governments continued to inveigh against, and observers continued to complain of the evils of excessive Persianization for the rest of the century. In June 1876, for example, the Government of the NWP ordered district and divisional officials to end the 'highly improper' state of affairs in which most offices conducted public business in a language so full of Persian and Arabic words that those most concerned could not understand the proceedings. Although this highly Persianized style stemmed from long tradition so that to effect any change required constant attention, continued the circular, the importance of the subject demanded special attention. As far as possible, the official style should approach the Urdu of ordinary conversation, though not at the expense of those legal and technical terms presently in use.⁵³

These pious injunctions accomplished little, however, for in 1882 Bharatendu Harishchandra of Banaras, testifying before the Hunter Commission,⁵⁴ furnished several examples of the pedantry of court officials, who used long-winded Persian phrases for ordinary vernacular terms.⁵⁵ In 1897, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, a lawyer at the High Court of Allahabad, noted that the unnecessary use of Persian and Arabic words and phrases rendered official records in the vernacular only partially intelligible.⁵⁶ One critic with a fine sense of irony remarked that the Urdu translations of the government orders attempting to remedy the situation often displayed the very faults they decried!⁵⁷

The evidence has indicated that both the highly Persianized language of the courts and offices and the resistance to any change came from

court officials, mainly Muslims and Kayasths, whose education and training gave them a near-monopoly of government service. Their attitudes may well have engendered or reinforced similar attitudes in their British superiors. In 1875 S. C. Bayly, the Commissioner of Patna Division, noted that the opposition of these officials to making Hindi the official vernacular of Bihar carried over to their British superiors, who unconsciously imbibed the prejudices of their subordinates.⁵⁸ Two decades earlier the Sadar Board of Revenue of the NWP had commented on an interesting difference between the style of Urdu used in the ordinary dealings of the Revenue Department and that used in the business of the civil courts. The former, employed by officers whose duties brought them into frequent contact with landholders and their tenants, consisted of simple and idiomatic Urdu, free from the extremes of Persianization or Sanskritization. The latter, utilized by officers whose functions brought them into daily contact with court officials, consisted of Urdu unintelligible to those not thoroughly acquainted with Persian. This suggests that the language attitudes and capabilities of the Indians with whom British officials regularly dealt shaped and reinforced their own language attitudes.⁵⁹

The pro-Persian attitudes of many British officials and the personal economic interests of Indian officials combined to ensure continuity in the nature of the official vernacular, and to make a mockery of the chief reasons for replacing Persian with the vernaculars in the first place. Wherever Urdu replaced Persian, little change took place in the character of the court language. Bayly noted that Urdu law papers showed hardly any difference from those written four decades earlier in Persian. He did not object to the use of the technical terms of law or civil business, but rather to the unintelligible jargon used in the body of court documents whose writers used the longest Arabic words known to them.⁶⁰ In sum, just as Persian dominated the beginnings of Urdu literature, so it overshadowed the introduction of Urdu as the official vernacular. Persian and Urdu, powerful symbols of the former cultural, political, and economic supremacy of Muslims, continued to flourish under British rule. The perception of Urdu- and Persian-educated Muslims and Hindus as unfairly advantaged in the competition for government service helped to stimulate the development of group consciousness among Hindi-educated Hindus.

The Kaithi Script

In a Hindi drama written near the end of the nineteenth century, the Nagari script, personified as Queen Devanagari, pleads her case against Begam Urdu, the daughter of Persian, who has usurped the Queen's rightful place.⁶¹ The author might well have added another character named Princess Kaithi, for this cursive variant of the Nagari script attempted to oust her own mother on several occasions. Government policy towards Kaithi⁶² showed considerable inconsistency: officials in the NWP generally, though not always, opposed, those in Oudh, with one notable exception, opposed, while those in Bihar commonly favoured this script. Indian advocates of Hindi seldom mentioned Nagari's daughter, and then only in disparaging terms. In the long run the Kaithi script lost out to the Nagari, but the outcome long remained in doubt. The pool of symbols from which the Hindi-speaking elite was to draw included some that proved unacceptable.

The opposition of the Government of the NWP to Kaithi can be traced back as far as 1847, when Nagari, not Kaithi, became the official script in the village schools of Agra district.⁶³ In 1852 the Sadar Board of Revenue directed that Nagari be used for all annual village papers written in Hindi.⁶⁴ Education reports from the 1870s and 1880s indicate that the government would not appoint *patwārīs* (village record keepers) who knew only Kaithi.⁶⁵ The same reports show that government schools, with very occasional exceptions, did not teach any of the various cursive forms of Nagari.⁶⁶ When the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Antony MacDonnell, issued a resolution concerning the official provincial script in 1900, he ignored the advice of his Board of Revenue to consider the inclusion of the widely-used Kaithi, and referred only to the Nagari.⁶⁷

In Oudh, government policy exhibited more inconsistency.⁶⁸ In 1871 the Director of Public Instruction for Oudh, Colin Browning, officially prohibited the study of Kaithi in village schools until the second class, in town schools until the third, and in district schools until the sixth. Parents who wished their children to study Kaithi before Nagari would have to pay a fee. Browning did not wish to ban the teaching of Kaithi, but rather to ensure that pupils would leave school knowing something more than the Kaithi script and the multiplication table.⁶⁹

A few years later, however, Kaithi found a vigorous proponent in Browning's successor, J. C. Nesfield. In 1875 Nesfield reported that he was about to change the curriculum of the government schools of Oudh to include Kaithi writing and Kaithi arithmetic along with Nagari in the lowest classes.⁷⁰ In the same year, he set about the creation of an

improved Kaithi script. He had samples of Kaithi writing collected from every *tahsīl* (revenue subdivision of a district) in Oudh, and ordered an Indian education official to devise a new script. A year later the Chief Commissioner of Oudh directed that the new script be taught in vernacular schools to anyone who preferred it to the Persian script. By 1881 textbooks (transliterations of various business manuals) in the improved Kaithi script had appeared in primary and middle vernacular schools, and had begun to be used for the instruction and examination of *pat-wārīs*. Candidates for the village teachership examination had to qualify in three different scripts: the Persian, the Nagari, and the Kaithi.⁷¹

Nesfield explained the reasons for his policy in some detail. In Oudh, he declared, no one used the Nagari script for either public or private business. Even Brahmans did not use Nagari for business matters, but only for copying out Sanskrit manuscripts. Though government schools in Oudh taught Nagari, in Nesfield's opinion, they were wasting their time, for the students abandoned the script as soon as they left school. The government might as usefully introduce Chinese! Should the government desire a second script for court documents in Oudh, Kaithi rather than Nagari deserved the honour.⁷² Nesfield's eager partisanship for Kaithi, reminds us of Shore's enthusiasm for Nagari. Like Shore's experiment too, Nesfield's attempt came to nothing, for after 1888 the education reports of Oudh contain no mention of the teaching of Kaithi.

Although the reports give no reasons for this change, we can easily guess the underlying attitudes of the British officials responsible from previous criticisms of Kaithi. In the NWP the Inspector of the Third Circle of the Department of Public Instruction, Ralph Griffith, wrote in 1858 that the replacement of the 'illegible' Kaithi and other cursive forms of Nagari had proven most beneficial to education. As long as government had allowed village papers to be written in Kaithi, village schoolmasters had continued to teach the script, thus excluding the Hindi school books of the Department printed in the Nagari script.⁷³ In 1862 T. B. Cann, another Inspector, reported that the government's village schools owed much of their success to the regulation that village accounts and all papers submitted to district officers had to use the Urdu or the Nagari scripts, and not the undecipherable Kaithi.⁷⁴ In Oudh, a Senior Inspector of Schools in Oudh, A. Thomson, referred to Kaithi in 1870 as 'a barbarous system of writing'.⁷⁵ Browning had asserted that the Kaithi script would never lead students to higher learning.⁷⁶

The attitudes of Indian supporters of the Nagari script, though seldom expressed, paralleled those of British officials. In 1883 the editor of the *Hindi Pradip* of Allahabad noted that the provincial government was considering the question of substituting the Nagari script for the Persian. Unfortunately, several officers had recommended the use of Kaithi on the grounds of greater ease in writing and more widespread use than the Nagari. The editor asserted the opposite, claiming that only *patwārīs* used Kaithi while other classes of people used Nagari.⁷⁷ In the same year the Hindi *Brahman* of Kanpur observed that the local government had queried district officers as to whether court documents should be written in Hindi as well as in Urdu, and if so, in the Nagari or Kaithi script, and disparaged Kaithi as being no better than the Persian script.⁷⁸ In 1900 the Hindi *Bharat Jivan* of Banaras criticized as ambiguous the *mūḍiyā* script (another cursive variant of Nagari) used by Hindu trading classes.⁷⁹ These classes could never hope to better their condition until they adopted and received their education through the Nagari script. In 1902 the annual report of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha (Society for the Promotion of Nagari), the foremost Hindi organization of the day, declared that no letters were more excellent than the Nagari, and that the Sabha could not display any enthusiasm for or lend any support to the promotion of Kaithi.⁸⁰ Religious and social considerations may well have influenced the attitudes of the Sabha and other Indian promoters of Nagari: while Kaithi and other cursive scripts had strong associations with business and trading classes, Nagari had strong links with Brahmans and the sacred Sanskrit literature of Hinduism. Moreover, one piece of evidence suggests that Kaithi had some sort of association with Hindustani (Urdu). Nesfield wrote in 1876 that 'no such association [like that of Nagari] exists between Kaithi and Sanskrit. On the contrary, there is a counter association already established between the Kaithi character and the Hindustani vocabulary. . . .'⁸¹ Thus, Kaithi may not have been *shuddh* [pure] enough for *shuddh* [here, highly Sanskritized] Hindi in the eyes of Nagari's partisans.

In Bihar, unlike the NWP&O, official policy by 1880 had begun to promote both the Nagari and Kaithi scripts. In that year the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir Ashley Eden, ordered the *exclusive* use of Nagari or Kaithi in much of Bihar.⁸² The government intended the Nagari and Kaithi scripts to take the place of the Persian script in printed and hand-written documents respectively.⁸³ Soon measures were taken to create a font of Kaithi type, however, borrowing the

improved script created in Oudh by the efforts of Nesfield. By 1881 this new version of Kaithi had been prescribed for general use in the primary vernacular schools of Bihar, and had begun to appear in printed textbooks.⁸⁴

The government of Bengal justified the new policy by contending that Kaithi was the 'popular character' of Bihar, and evidenced the flourishing condition of the indigenous schools which taught this script.⁸⁵ Kaithi continued to flourish in Bihar for at least three more decades. In 1912, for example, the Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Arrah (in western Bihar) sent a memorial to the Government of Bihar asking that textbooks for lower primary classes be printed in the Nagari script.⁸⁶ In 1913 the Hindi *Abhyudaya* of Allahabad urged the government to make Nagari the court script of Bihar in place of Kaithi.⁸⁷ To Hindi supporters, the Kaithi script did not possess the proper qualities to join the 'pool of symbols' suitable to differentiate Hindi from Urdu.

The Bihar government's policy towards Kaithi met with severe criticism from a distinguished Bengali educator, Dr Rajendralal Mitra, Fellow of Calcutta University, President of the Central Textbook Committee, Director of the Government Wards' Institution, and holder of other distinctions. Speaking before the Hunter Commission in 1882,⁸⁸ Mitra referred to the new script as the 'absurd and ludicrous consummation' of the government's promises to give the people of Bihar their own languages and scripts for their legal business. Previously, he stated, textbooks for Bihar schools, printed in the Nagari script and the Hindi language, had come from Banaras. This procedure had involved no special expense for the preparation of textbooks. Moreover, for each book that Bihar could produce, the North-Western Provinces could produce a hundred. Most important, the Banaras texts helped to keep the people of Bihar 'linguistically united with those with whom they were one in race, religion and close relationship', while the government's policy would eventually deprive them 'of the literature bequeathed them by their ancestors and of the literature which their kinsmen in the North-West will continue to rear up'.⁸⁹

The fate of Kaithi illustrates a number of important particulars about British language attitudes and policies, and the corresponding Indian attitudes and reactions. Local officials had a surprising degree of freedom to experiment, while provincial governments saw little need to coordinate their policies. A few years or a few miles could separate radically opposed measures. One official might labour to bring about what his successors would undo. Though the benefit of the masses was

the supposed touchstone of British efforts, officials found no difficulty in ignoring rather than taking advantage of the widespread popularity of Kaithi. Indian attitudes corresponded to those of the authorities who denigrated this variant of Nagari. To the Hindi-speaking elite, Kaithi could not possibly have matched the social, religious, and literary associations so richly exhibited by Nagari, and moreover had suspect connections with Hindustani vocabulary. Despite its derivation from Nagari, Kaithi merited no more consideration than the Persian script. In the process of multi-symbol congruence, some symbols are rejected, not only because of their associations with the opposing group, but also because of their inadequacy to embody the master symbol of the elite. Both Kaithi and Braj Bhasha,⁹⁰ for different reasons, proved unacceptable to the Hindi-speaking elite.

The Nagari Script in the Central Provinces

In August 1871 a public meeting took place in Jabalpur in the Central Provinces,⁹¹ under the auspices of the Hitkarini Sabha (Society for the Promotion of the General Welfare), to discuss the question of the proper court language for the province. Ten prominent citizens, nine Hindus and one Muslim, addressed the meeting; eight of them (including the Muslim) advocated Hindi, the other two Urdu. Those who spoke for Hindi depicted a language easy to learn and necessary for the temporal and spiritual improvement of the masses, and portrayed Urdu as foreign, difficult to learn, and a barrier to government employment. Those who spoke for Urdu described a language euphonious and beautiful, and spurned Hindi as a rude dialect which made people dull and stupid. Those attending the meeting voted in favour of Hindi and agreed to send a memorial to the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces asking for Hindi to be made the language of the law courts.⁹²

The memorialists, who directed their remarks at a provincial conference of civil officials to be held the following month, echoed the words of Shore more than three decades earlier when they argued that good government necessarily required courts of law to carry on their proceedings in the language read and understood by the people. The general public, not knowing Urdu, was at the mercy of court officials. Despite the inducement of government employment offered by the study of the official language, the number of those studying Urdu had declined during the last several years, while the number of those studying Hindi had increased.⁹³

If the government abolished Urdu, the memorialists continued,

education officials could concentrate their efforts on encouraging Hindi, thereby giving a great impetus to popular education. Claims of the connection between language policy and education appeared at frequent intervals as the Hindi movement developed. While such a connection certainly existed,⁵⁶ those who argued thus frequently served their own interests. The memorial bore nearly fifty signatures, many of them Bengali. English and Bengali had ousted Persian in the courts, schools, newspapers and literature of Bengal by 1840.⁵⁷ Hence educated Bengalis, who made up a significant percentage of the expanding bureaucracy of British rule outside Bengal, naturally found Hindi and the Nagari script far more compatible than Persianized Urdu.⁵⁸

In September 1871 the conference of civil officials duly met in Nagpur and discussed, among other matters, the question of the official language of the province. Most of the officers agreed on the desirability of a change, and the Acting Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, Colonel R. H. Keatinge, laid the matter before the Government of India in a minute which included a copy of the Hitkarini Sabha's memorial. Keatinge traced—inaccurately—the history of language policy in the province, declaring that the Persian language and script had enjoyed official status in the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories before 1835, when Shore had ordered the gradual abolition of Persian and the substitution of Hindi in the Nagari script.⁵⁹ He went on to describe the eventual triumph of Urdu, attributing the tendency to excessive Persianization to the great importance which 'Native bureaucrats' gave to maintaining the Persian script. These bureaucrats no doubt had some 'genuine feeling' for the script, but they also keenly appreciated the enormous advantage they held in being the 'sole interpreters between the governing class and the people'.⁶⁰ Between 1861 and 1871, however, Marathi had become the official court language of four districts in the south, Oriya of one district in the extreme east, and Telugu of another district in the extreme south. Hindi had received the same status in four districts, one in the extreme west and three in the east. In the remaining nine districts, the Divisions of Jabalpur and Nerbudda, Urdu had maintained official status.⁶¹

Keatinge argued convincingly for a change from Urdu to Hindi, or at least from the Persian script to the Nagari in these nine districts. He marshalled statistics to defend his case which showed that the vast majority of *patwārīs* and landholders in the area concerned knew only Hindi. In addition, nearly 85 per cent of the schools teaching Hindi or Urdu taught Hindi exclusively, while fewer than 8 per cent taught only

Urdu.¹⁰⁰ The Government of India accepted his arguments and in 1872 authorized 'the Hindi character' (the Nagari script) for processes, notifications, proclamations, and other types of official documents. In addition, 'Hindi' was to take the place of Urdu in police offices.¹⁰¹

One would think that these orders secured the place of Nagari. The Government of India, however, had not authorized the *exclusive* use of Nagari, but only the *permissive* use. Hence a decade later we find Ambica Charan Banerji, head clerk of the Deputy Commissioner's office in Jabalpur, testifying before the Hunter Commission that Hindi had not yet become the language of the courts in the nine districts in question. Though he and other members of the Hitkarini Sabha had submitted a memorial on the matter, the government had only partially carried out the change of court language.¹⁰² Banerji did not mention the fact that the local government had put out a fresh circular in 1881. This directed that petitions might be presented in the Nagari script and the Hindi language in all those districts in which Urdu now had the status of court language. Furthermore, courts must give all copies of decrees, orders, judgements and proceedings in Hindi unless the applicant asked for them in Urdu. Finally, no one should receive any judicial appointment thereafter unless he could read and write Nagari fluently.¹⁰³

These last orders seemed to move the government well towards the exclusive use of Hindi and Nagari on the policy spectrum. Yet four years later a resident of Hoshangabad (in the Nerbudda Division of the Central Provinces) complained in the Hindi *Bharat Jivan* (Banaras) that although Hindi had become the court language of his district, most of the old Urdu-knowing court officials could not write it properly.¹⁰⁴ Other evidence indicates that though the Nagari script did finally become established in the courts of the Central Provinces, Hindi did not. In 1900, C. J. Lyall, then the Secretary of the Judicial and Public Department of the India Office, and author of a work on Hindustani (i.e., Urdu) grammar, observed that though the courts in the Central Provinces had used the Nagari script for years, the language was 'not a whit less Persianized than it is in the NWP & Oudh, where the Persian character is in use'.¹⁰⁵ A change of script did not necessarily bring a change of language, not only because of the vested interests of court officials, but also due to the force of linguistic continuity and the lack of generally accepted Hindi legal and technical terms.

The Nagari and Kaithi Scripts in Bihar

The replacement of the Persian script by Nagari and Kaithi in Bihar¹⁰⁶ paralleled that in the Central Provinces in several respects. Both processes began in the 1870s and resulted in significant changes by the early 1880s. In both cases, no substantial change took place until the government ordered the exclusive rather than the permissive use of new scripts. In both cases, Indian petitioners, notably Bengalis, played important roles. Lastly, the language attitudes of the British officials concerned largely determined the key features of the policies they advocated. Those who saw Urdu and Hindi as distinct languages (e.g., Keatinge) tended to favour a change of language as well as a change of script, while those who saw them as one language (e.g., some Bihar officials) tended to support a change of script only.¹⁰⁷

Sir George Campbell, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, began a vigorous attack on Urdu late in 1871. While on a tour of Bihar, he had found to his astonishment that 'the bastard, hybrid language of which the old Persian writers were too fond' (i.e., Urdu) still held sway not only in the courts and offices but also in the schools despite earlier efforts to root it out. Impressed by the claims of some education officers that the large majority of Hindus did not accept Urdu, he ordered Urdu 'absolutely abolished' in all schools. He followed this with a decree in 1873 making the use of 'the Hindi character' obligatory for certain purposes, and allowing district officers to use their discretion in introducing Hindi into court proceedings as much as possible.¹⁰⁸ Campbell's orders included both the Nagari and Kaithi scripts as well as the Hindi language, suggesting that he not only recognized the popularity of the latter script but also regarded Hindi as a separate language.¹⁰⁹

Though further orders on behalf of the new language and scripts materialized in 1874 and 1875, apparently little change resulted, for in the latter year residents of Patna and Bhagalpur (both in northern Bihar) addressed a petition to the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Richard Temple. They asked that the various orders directing the introduction of the Nagari script and Hindi into courts and offices actually be carried out. They also added some new twists to the time-worn arguments for and against Hindi and Nagari. Although antagonists castigated Hindi as a rude language with neither literature nor grammar, in reality Hindi was a branch of Sanskrit, recognized by the principal English and German scholars as the best language in the world and the source of all other languages. One could learn Nagari in only three or four months,

while the Persian script required one or two years, and also could far more easily be altered for nefarious purposes.¹¹⁰

Temple assured the petitioners that the government intended to carry out the orders already in existence. These orders enjoined that all processes, notifications, and proclamations should be made in Hindi; that official records should be kept in Hindi; that petitions should be received in either Hindi or Hindustani; and that police officers and court officials should have a knowledge of 'the Hindi character'.¹¹¹ He could not agree to their request that Hindi become the exclusive court language, however, since his predecessor had opposed such a change. Moreover, the Lieutenant-Governor had no desire to pass any orders which would appear to indicate that Hindi and Urdu were two distinct languages. He recognized the tendency of some Hindi writers to reject all words not Sanskrit in origin and of some Urdu writers to confine themselves to words of Persian origin, but wished to combine these two separate and discordant elements into one full and harmonious language. To this end, he proposed to require candidates for employment in all but the lowest government offices to know both the Nagari and Persian scripts equally well.¹¹²

Many British officials shared Temple's views on the nature of Urdu and Hindi. Thus in the same year, the Government of India expressed support for any measures to reduce the antagonism between Urdu and Hindi, and opposition to any instruction in 'an artificial, Sanskritized language' under the name of Hindi in government or government-aided schools.¹¹³ J. C. Nesfield, reporting on education in Oudh in 1876, contended that the province had two different scripts, Persian and Nagari, but only one language, Hindustani (i.e., Urdu). He deplored the tendency of Hindi schoolbooks to use 'obsolete' words of Sanskrit origin, and called Hindi 'a language which no one speaks, and which no one, unless he has been specially educated, can interpret'.¹¹⁴ Temple's successor, Sir Ashley Eden, believed that Hindi and Urdu were 'identical languages' and hence his 1880 resolution (see above) had directed a change of script only, and not a change of language.¹¹⁵ These and many other officials regarded Hindi (i.e., Sanskritized Khari Boli Hindi) as a manufactured language with no real basis in popular usage.

The Patna and Bhagalpur petitioners used the same highly Sanskritized Hindi to which these officials objected. A. W. Croft, Inspector of Schools in Bihar, found their zeal for Sanskrit words as ludicrous as the ardour of a hypothetical writer of pure English who would replace the 'impenetrability of matter' with the 'unthroughforcesomeness [sic] of

stuff'.¹¹⁶ Education officials in Oudh, to whom the Government of India had referred the issue for comment, had little doubt that the petition reflected the desire of Bengalis to enhance their prospects for government employment outside their native province. Since Bengalis had better opportunities for learning English than their fellow countrymen in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh or the Punjab, these officials maintained, a good knowledge of the vernacular in addition would increase their opportunities for the public service in these provinces. Because the Persian script and Arabic vocabulary of Urdu presented difficulties, Bengalis naturally inclined to the more familiar script and Sanskrit vocabulary of Hindi believing they could learn this more easily. Their motives, claimed the officials, had nothing to do with the superiority of one language over the other or the welfare of the people. On the contrary, as long as the English schools and colleges of Bengal continued to turn out about 2,000 men each year who could not find government service in overcrowded Bengal, the question of the substitution of Hindi for Urdu as the court language of the Upper Provinces (Bihar, the NWP&O, and the Punjab) would continue to be raised.¹¹⁷

Eden's resolution of 1880, ordering the exclusive use of Nagari or Kaithi in much of Bihar, elicited several responses, most of which supported the measure.¹¹⁸ The most significant opposition came from the National Muhammadan Association of Calcutta in 1882, more than a year after the Lieutenant-Governor's decision had come into effect. In a memorial addressed to the Governor-General Lord Ripon, complaining about the general condition of Muslims in India, the Association referred to the recent change in Bihar. The introduction of the new scripts, insisted the memorialists, echoing the petitioners of Dacca nearly fifty years earlier,¹¹⁹ had proved unpopular with all the educated classes of Bihar, Hindus and Muslims alike. Moreover, the majority of Hindus in Bihar were 'in their manners, their customs, and their modes of amusement, Muhammadans' who took pride in speaking 'pure Urdu'.¹²⁰ This language, the Association declared, had been the language of the province for several centuries which everybody spoke in one form or another. The antagonists of Hindi consistently reiterated the plea that Muslims and Hindus shared a joint culture of which Islamic languages were an important part. Urdu supporters stressed assimilation, represented by the equation Urdu = Hindu + Muslim; Hindi partisans emphasized differentiation, embodied by the equations Urdu = Muslim and Hindi = Hindu.

Several months later, A. P. MacDonnell, the Officiating Secretary to

the Government of Bengal, and later to preside over the official recognition of the Nagari script as the Lieutenant-Governor of the NWP&O, rebutted the arguments of the Association. Writing to the Government of India, MacDonnell noted that the latest administrative report of the Commissioner of the Patna Division of Bihar gave sufficient answer to the objections of the memorialists. According to the Commissioner, the change had gone smoothly and had considerably benefited the public. A new class of court officials and legal practitioners acquainted with Hindi was springing up, and the government had considered the claims of the existing incumbents. Subordinate officials and law agents knew some Hindi; all of them could speak and most of them could write it. The Lieutenant-Governor, remarked MacDonnell, considered the Association's protests a matter of 'fictitious sentiment' since Muslims in Calcutta, unaffected by the change, were making far more strenuous objections than the supposedly suffering Muslims in Bihar.¹²¹

MacDonnell's letter showed a confusion of thought that characterized much of British language policy in north India in the nineteenth century and beyond. Eden's resolution of 1880 had specifically referred to script only, yet the letter referred to language. This tendency to confuse language and script, or to identify them, not only muddled the thinking of Indian partisans but also darkened the counsels of British administrators.¹²² British language policy suffered from another notable weakness, evident in the failure to eliminate excessively Persianized Urdu and in the slow progress of the Nagari script in the Central Provinces, namely, the lack of systematic and vigorous enforcement. Even in Bihar, despite the apparent firmness of the 1880 resolution, in 1893 we find the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal yet again directing the use of Hindi and Nagari and forbidding the use of the Persian script in the courts.¹²³ More than two decades of efforts had not succeeded in completely banishing the Persian script.

An Analysis of Language Policy

In 1874 F. S. Growse, a British civil servant and language scholar, wrote a perceptive analysis of the language biases of his countrymen in India. British officials, he noted, had become so used to communicating with their subordinates in Urdu, that most of them regarded Urdu as the vernacular of the country. This familiarity with the speech of the Muslim minority rather than that of the Hindu majority, meant that Arabic and Persian received a great deal of attention while Sanskrit

received little. While the former two classical languages were considered 'proper to the country' the latter was viewed as 'utterly dead'.¹²⁴ Several years later while giving evidence before the Hunter Commission, Growse adduced another reason for the prejudice of Englishmen for Urdu and against Hindi. Many district officers, unacquainted with Hindi literature, though having a fair knowledge of Urdu literature, on encountering Hindi schoolbooks and their highly pedantic style, naturally concluded that such a language must be 'a grotesque unreality'. Unfortunately, many of the authors were pandits who considered long words preferable to short, and the display of their own erudition more important than the edification of their readers.¹²⁵

Growse's observations go far to explain the strong distaste for Sanskritized Hindi of many British officials in north India, and underline the importance of historical continuity. Had the British found Sanskrit, not Persian, the language of administration of their predecessors, their language policies would very probably have favoured Sanskritized vernaculars and the Nagari or related scripts. Another major factor in the relative permanence of the Persian tradition in language policy arose from the unique blend of elements represented by Urdu. In other parts of India Persianized vernaculars written in the Persian script did not become major literary or administrative languages.¹²⁶ Even in Bengal, where Persian had become the language of state by the sixteenth century, only a few examples of Bengali written in the Persian script have come to light; Bengali Muslims generally used the Bengali script to write Bengali.¹²⁷ Had Persianized Khari Boli in the Persian script (i.e., Urdu) not existed, then British officials would almost certainly have replaced Persian in the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, Bihar, the Central Provinces and elsewhere in north India with some form of Hindi in the Nagari script, just as they replaced Persian with Bengali and the Bengali script in Bengal.

The convenient existence of Urdu, ideally suited for continuing the hegemony of Persian in north India, goes far to explain British language policy. We need to add another equally necessary factor, however, for a fuller explanation: the presence of Muslims as a large or politically important element of society. Wherever we find these two factors conjoined, British policy generally favoured Urdu; wherever we find one or the other missing, policy favoured other languages. From this admittedly oversimplified perspective north India forms a spectrum of the increasing importance of Urdu from east to west. In Bengal, neither Urdu nor an analogous form of Persianized Bengali existed, though

Muslims made up a large percentage of the population. As a result, the government never seriously considered using Urdu as the official vernacular. In Bihar and the Central Provinces, while Urdu existed, the Muslim element of the population lacked size or importance. Here the Nagari script took root before the end of the century, though not without difficulty.

In the North-Western Provinces and especially in Oudh, where Urdu thrived and Muslims had political importance far out of proportion to their numbers, British policy inclined strongly towards Urdu, though without actively suppressing Hindi and Nagari. Here conditions were ripe for a long and protracted struggle as the Urdu-speaking elite faced an increasing challenge from Hindi and Nagari partisans intent on differentiating themselves. By the end of the century Nagari had won an inconclusive and largely symbolic victory. In the Punjab, where Urdu flourished and Muslims formed the largest and most politically powerful part of the population, British policy unequivocally supported Urdu. Here Urdu remained the official vernacular right up to independence, while Hindi and Nagari remained in a very subordinate position. So complete was the dominance of Urdu, that Hindi was not even a medium of instruction in primary schools for boys.¹²⁸ The existence of other contenders, Punjabi, and for Sikhs the Gurmukhi script, further complicated the language situation in the Punjab.

British language policy often clearly reflected the wish of the government not to antagonize Muslims where they were politically powerful through any change of language or script which could be interpreted as an attack on their faith or their livelihood. For example, in 1875 an Oudh official warned the government that to support Hindi against Urdu would be 'very hazardous' and that 'political danger' could be expected from the disaffection of Muslims thereby ousted from the public service.¹²⁹ In 1898 Sir Antony Macdonnell, Lieutenant-Governor of the NWP&O, cautioned a delegation in support of the Nagari script not to expect rapid change. He knew from personal experience, he told them, the difficulties which had attended the introduction of Kaithi in Bihar, where Muslims exercised far less influence and composed a far smaller proportion of those in government service than in their own province. Therefore the delegation could well imagine the greater difficulties of effecting a similar change in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh.¹³⁰

The inconsistencies and contradictions of British language policy mirrored inconsistent and contradictory language situations in different

provinces of north India, the lack of linguistic sophistication of many officials, and the basic fact of differentiation outstripping assimilation as the pace of social mobilization increased during the nineteenth century. We have seen these two processes reflected in the development of vernacular literature and publication in the preceding chapter, and in the next we will survey them in the areas of education and government employment. British language policy both resulted from and contributed to the larger political processes which eventually led to the partition of British India into India and Pakistan, an outcome almost exactly paralleled by the linguistic partition of the Hindi-Urdu continuum into highly Sanskritized Hindi and highly Persianized Urdu.

Each of the three major protagonists in the language controversy—Muslims, Hindus and British—had differing attitudes towards the twin processes of assimilation and differentiation. Educated Muslims, for the most part supporters of Urdu, rejected the Hindu linguistic heritage and emphasized the joint Hindu-Muslim origins of Urdu. In an 1873 issue of the *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, for example, a Muslim commenting on the recent government language decisions in Bihar insisted that Muslims had a ‘natural antipathy’ to studying Hindi which they considered ‘quite alien’ to them.¹³¹

Those educated Hindus who were partisans of Hindi turned their backs on languages and scripts associated with Islam, and promoted Hindi in the Nagari script. In 1882 *The Calcutta Review* carried an article by Babu Syamacharan Ganguli who asked Muslims to accept the fact that Urdu ‘is Hindi in its basis, just as they themselves are largely Hindu by race’.¹³² He urged Muslims to merge into the Hindu mainstream of Indian culture, for the Hindus would never consider the reverse. Contrary to Ganguli’s dictum, however, many educated Hindus, however, *did* consider the reverse, and willingly included at least part of Muslim culture as a legitimate current in the mainstream of Indian culture.

Muslims and some Hindus, then, each offered assimilation to the other, as it were, but at the same time maintained or increased their own differentiation. Other Hindus found no contradictions in assimilation to a blend of Muslim and Hindu traditions. The third party, the British, showed the most ambivalence, sometimes championing one of the competing linguistic traditions, sometimes the other, and sometimes trying to tread a narrow path between them. The third of these alternatives emerged most frequently when the forces of Hindi and Urdu were relatively equal, as in the North-Western Provinces and

Oudh. A. W. Croft, an Inspector of Schools in Bihar, eloquently summed up this approach when he wrote in 1875:

To call Hindi and Urdu two languages, is to perpetuate a vicious error, originally due to the antagonism of Pandits and Maulavis. They have the same accidence and syntax, and the same stock of words for most simple objects and conceptions; they only diverge when it is necessary to express the language of compliment, of science, or of complex ideas in general. This is not to have two languages, but to have a language capable of being enriched from two different sources; and I conceive that it is the object of Government to destroy or to diminish this antagonism.¹³

Such an object was doomed to failure, however, for no government could counteract the powerful social forces reflected in the growing differentiation between Hindi and Urdu. Hindus willing to include both traditions found themselves in an increasingly difficult position as the forces of Hindi became more powerful. Muslims found themselves falling behind as larger and larger numbers of a socially mobilizing population assimilated to the equation of Hindi = Hindu equation rather than that of Urdu = Muslim + Hindu. Differentiation into two separate linguistic and religious traditions outpaced assimilation into one joint Hindu-Muslim Hindi-Urdu tradition.

NOTES

1. Madan Mohan Malaviya, *Court Character and Primary Education in N.-W. P. and Oudh* (Allahabad, 1897), p. 497, quoting *Printed Parliamentary Papers relating to the Affairs of India: General, Appendix I: Public* (1832).
2. More precisely, Hindustani (Urdu) in a modified version of the Persian script replaced Persian; this modified version contained several letters to represent sounds indigenous to Indian languages but not occurring in Persian, especially the retroflex consonants.
3. Chapter IV describes this educational system in considerable detail.
4. See the Glossary for the meaning of this term.
5. See Chapter I as well as the Glossary for an explanation of this term.
6. See Chapter I and the Glossary for the meaning of these two terms.
7. J. K. Majumdar, 'The Abolition of Persian as Court Language in British India', *Bombay University Journal*, XVI (September 1947), p. 131; Ramesh Chandra Srivastava, *Development of the Judicial System in India under the East India Company 1833-1858* (Lucknow, 1971), p. 108.
8. Srivastava, *Development of the Judicial System*, pp. 107-8.
9. Majumdar, 'The Abolition of Persian', p. 136; Srivastava, *Development of the Judicial System*, pp. 120-3.
10. For a more extensive review of contemporary British opinions on language, see

- Christopher R. King, *The Nagari Pracharini Sabha (Society for the Promotion of the Nagari Script and Language) of Benares 1893–1914: A Study in the Social and Political History of the Hindi Language*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1974, pp. 57–62.
11. This court, in both Calcutta and the N.W.P., was the chief court of appeal from the district courts until 1862 when it was amalgamated with a parallel court to form a High Court. Col. Henry Yule and A. C. Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, and of Kindred Terms, Etymological, Historical, Geographical and Discursive*, New Edition (London, 1903, reissued 1968), p. 862.
 12. Srivastava, *Development of the Judicial System*, pp. 115–17; Dayal Dass, 'Language Controversy a Century Ago', *Indian Historical Records Commission. Proceedings Volume XXXII, Part II* (February 1956), p. 103.
 13. The Board may have been referring to the several regional standards or even to local dialects; see the section of Chapter I entitled 'Linguistic and Social Background'.
 14. Majumdar, 'The Abolition of Persian', p. 132; Srivastava, *Development of the Judicial System*, p. 118, quoting Letter No. 696 of July 29, 1836 from the N.W.P. Sadar Court to the Government of N.W.P., *Government of India Proceedings, Home Department*, Judicial Branch Consultations No. 74 of 10 October 1836.
 15. Majumdar, 'The Abolition of Persian', pp. 135–6, quoting a letter from Morris of 9 January 1837 enclosed in a letter of 4 March 1837 from the Registrar of the Court, Sudder Dewanny Adawlut, Fort William, Bengal to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal in the *Judicial Department, Judicial Consultations (Civil)*, 21 March, 1837, No. 26; Madan Mohan Malaviya, *Court Character and Primary Education in N.-W.P. and Oudh* (Allahabad, 1897), Appendix, p. 15, quoting F. J. Shore, *Notes on Indian Affairs*, Volume I (London, 1837), p. 36.
 16. Majumdar, 'The Abolition of Persian', pp. 135–6.
 17. Dass, 'Language Controversy', p. 103; Majumdar, 'The Abolition of Persian', p. 132; Srivastava, *Development of the Judicial System*, p. 115–17, 118.
 18. Srivastava, *Development of the Judicial System*, pp. 113–14, quoting Letter No. 9 of 13 January 1836 to Registrar, Sadar Nizamat Adalat, Allahabad, *Government of India Proceedings, Home Department*, Judicial Branch Consultations No. 85 of 10 October 1836.
 19. Srivastava, *Development of the Judicial System*, p. 111.
 20. Nearly half of the 125 officials consulted during the inquiry favoured the replacement of Persian by a vernacular, nearly half preferred the status quo, and the small remainder opted for English. As indicated above, both English and the vernaculars eventually replaced Persian, but at different levels. Dass, 'Language Controversy', p. 105; Srivastava, *Development of the Judicial System*, pp. 108–9.
 21. Majumdar, 'The Abolition of Persian', pp. 132–3, 135–6; Malaviya, *Court Character*, Appendix, p. 15; NWP Lieutenant-Governor's *Proceedings Sudder Board of Revenue Department*, 19 July to 2 August 1836, Range 221, 77, No. 52; Srivastava, *Development of the Judicial System*, pp. 118–19, quoting Minute of 14 July 1836, *Government of India Proceedings, Home Department*, Judicial Branch Consultations, No. 74 of 10 October 1836.

22. Majumdar, 'The Abolition of Persian', pp. 135-6.
23. See the section of this chapter entitled 'The Nagari Script in the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories'.
24. Ibid.
25. Shri Ray Krishna Das, Interview, Banaras, 6 April 1972.
26. Majumdar, 'The Abolition of Persian', pp. 136-7.
27. These territories, acquired by the British early in the nineteenth century, lay in the hilly plateau region of central India. They came first under the control of the Presidency of Bengal, then under the North-Western Provinces on the formation of this province in 1836, then from 1843 were separately administered until 1853, when they were reattached to the North-Western Provinces until 1861, when they became part of the newly-formed Central Provinces. C. Collin Davies, *An Historical Atlas of the Indian Peninsula*, 2nd edition (Oxford, 1959), pp. 52-5, 58-61, 66-7, 72-3; Douglas Dewar, *A Handbook to the English Pre-Mutiny Records in the Government Record Rooms of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh* (N.P., [c. 1919]), p. 484; *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Volume XXIV, New Edition (Oxford, 1908), pp. 158-9; R. C. Majumdar et al. *An Advanced History of India*, 2nd edition (London, 1963), pp. 694, 705-6, 720-1.
28. Letter of 21 November 1835 from Shore to the Three Principal and Three Junior Assistants, *NWP Lieutenant-Governor's Proceedings in the Sudder Board of Revenue Department*, 2 to 16 September 1836, Range 221, Volume 79, No. 1678.
29. Letter of 29 October 1835 from Shore to Secretary to the Government Judicial and Revenue Departments, *NWP Lieutenant-Governor's Proceedings in the Sudder Board of Revenue Department*, 2 to 16 September 1836, Range 221, Volume 79, No. 1603.
30. *NWP Lieutenant-Governor's Proceedings in the Sudder Board of Revenue Department*, 19 July to 2 August 1836, Range 221, 77, No. 52.
31. Majumdar, 'The Abolition of Persian', pp. 137-8.
32. Majumdar, 'The Abolition of Persian', pp. 139-40.
33. Srivastava, *Development of the Judicial System*, p. 125, quoting *Government of India Proceedings, Home Department*, Judicial Branch Consultations, No. 12 of 28 June 1841; p. 199, quoting from the translation of the petition in *Government of India Proceedings, Home Department*, Judicial Branch Consultations, No. 7 of 28 June 1841.
34. See the section of Chapter I entitled 'Theoretical Background' and also the Glossary for the meaning of this term.
35. Srivastava, *Development of the Judicial System*, pp. 199-201.
36. See Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims* (Cambridge, 1974) for an extended discussion of the Urdu-speaking elite.
37. Srivastava, *Development of the Judicial System*, pp. 126-7.
38. See Glossary.
39. See Glossary.
40. See Chapter I and the Glossary for an explanation of the term 'objective characteristic'. See also the section of Chapter IV entitled 'The Language of School Textbooks', for a discussion of 'Sanskritization'.

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41. Letter of 29 October 1835 from Shore to Secretary to the Government, Judicial and Revenue Departments, *NWP Lieutenant-Governor's Proceedings in the Sudder Board of Revenue Department*, 2 to 16 September 1836, Range 221, Volume 79, No. 1603; Letter of 21 November 1835 from Shore to the Three Principal and Three Junior Assistants, *NWP Lieutenant-Governor's Proceedings in the Sudder Board of Revenue Department*, 2 to 16 September 1836, Range 221, Volume 79, No. 1678.
42. At present both Hindi and Marathi use practically identical versions of the Nagari script. The Marathi version includes one or two letters and diacritical marks not in the Hindi version or used in a different way. Shore may have been referring to some cursive variety of the Nagari script used for Marathi at the time.
43. Letter of 29 October 1835 from Shore to Secretary to the Government, Judicial and Revenue Departments, *NWP Lieutenant-Governor's Proceedings in the Sudder Board of Revenue Department*, 2 to 16 September 1836, Range 221, Volume 79, No. 1603. The use of Nagari in Kumaun continued: see Nandalal Chatterji, 'The Government's Attitude to Hindi-Urdu Hindusthani in the Post-Mutiny Period', *Journal of the Uttar Pradesh Historical Society*, New Series, III (1955), p. 26, and *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1873-74, Orders of Government, p. 15.
44. Letter from Shore to Sadar Board of Revenue, *NWP Lieutenant-Governor's Proceedings in the Sudder Board of Revenue Department*, 2 to 16 September 1836, Range 221, Volume 79, No. 84.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
48. See Chapter IV for an extensive discussion of this matter.
49. Majumdar, 'The Abolition of Persian', pp. 135-6, quoting a letter from Morris of 9 January 1837 enclosed in a letter of 4 March 1837 from the Registrar of the Court, Sudder Dewanny Adawlut, Fort William, Bengal to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal in the *Judicial Department, Judicial Consultations (Civil)*, 21 March 1837, No. 26.
50. Letter from Sudder Board of Revenue, NWP, to Shore, 9 September 1836, *NWP Lieutenant-Governor's Proceedings in the Sudder Board of Revenue Department*, 2 to 16 September 1836, Range 221, Volume 79, No. 58.
51. *Report on the Administration of the Central Provinces for the Year 1871-72*, pp. xvi-xvii; *CP Home Proceedings*, March 1872, No. 39, p. 50.
52. Circular from the Sudder Board of Revenue to Division Commissioners of the N.-W. Provinces, 29 July 1836, *NWP Lieutenant-Governor's Proceedings in the Sudder Board of Revenue Department*, 19 July to 2 August 1836, Range 221, Volume 77, No. 52.
53. Chatterji, 'The Government's Attitude', pp. 15, 21. See Malaviya, *Court Character*, p. 8, Appendix, pp. 50-51, quoting portions of the Sadar Dewani Adalat's Circular Order No. 33, 19 April 1839 and of the Sadar Board of Revenue's Circular Order No. III, 28 August 1840; Appendix, p. 52, quoting letter from the Secretary to the Government of the NWP to the Registrar, Sadar Dewani and Nizamat Adalat, NWP, 5 January 1854; Appendix, pp. 52-3,

quoting letter from the Secretary to the Sudder Board of Revenue, NWP, to the Secretary to the Government, NWP, 10 January 1854.

54. See the section of Chapter V entitled 'The Hindi-Nagari Campaign of 1882' for more details on the Hunter Commission.
55. *Educ Comm Rpt NWP&O*, pp. 201–2.
56. Malaviya, *Court Character*, p. 8.
57. Malaviya, *Court Character*, p. 10, quoting the *Pioneer* (Allahabad) of 10 January 1873.
58. Chatterji, 'The Government's Attitude', p. 20.
59. Malaviya, *Court Character*, Appendix, pp. 52–3, quoting letter from the Secretary to the Sudder Board of Revenue, NWP, to the Secretary to the Government, NWP, 10 January 1854.
60. Chatterji, 'The Government's Attitude', pp. 15, 21.
61. Pandit Gauri Datta, *Nāgarī aur Urdū kā Swāng arthāt Nāgarī aur Urdū kā ek Nāṭak* [A Mime of Nagari and Urdu namely A Play of Nagari and Urdu] (Meerut, n.d.), p. 1. See the section of Chapter V entitled 'The Hindi-Nagari Movement in Vernacular Literature' for an extensive discussion of this play. See also a complete translation of and a thorough discussion of this play in Christopher R. King, 'Images of Virtue and Vice: The Hindi-Urdu Controversy in Two Nineteenth-century Hindi Plays', in Kenneth W. Johnes, editor, *Religious Controversy in British India: Dialogues in South Asian Languages*, (Albany, 1992).
62. The Kaithi script had several cousins, including Mahajani, Muria, and Sarafi. They shared several characteristics: business castes used them; their letters, simplified for rapid writing, derived from Nagari; and their illegibility had achieved notoriety.
63. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1847–48, Extract of Orders of Government, footnote on pp. xcv–xcvi.
64. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1856–57/1857–58, pp. 32–3. The government's policy towards scripts, not surprisingly, influenced both educational and administrative practices at the village level. Practices in Bihar differed considerably from those in the NWP&O, partly because of differing systems of the settlement of land revenue as the following extract from the *Education Commission: Report by the Bengal Provincial Committee* (Calcutta, 1884, pp. 46–7) makes clear:

'The discovery of large numbers of village pathsalas [schools] in Behar gave prominence to one important fact. It was found that the character (Kaithi) which the indigenous pathsalas taught their pupils to read and write, and which had not been recognised in the pathsalas previously brought under Government supervision, was the only one which could be employed with any hope of success, if the system of instruction was to be kept on the really broad and popular basis on which it rested. The Persian character was much affected by the higher classes of Muhammadans and learned Hindus; but the Kaithi character was known and used in every village in Behar by Hindus and Muhammadans alike. . . .

'It was known, of course, from the commencement of education operations in Behar, that Kaithi was the popular character. But it was also known that Kaithi was the popular character not of Behar only, but likewise of Oudh and the North-Western Provinces. Now, in devising their system of popular Elementary

schools, the authorities of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh had entirely discarded the Kaithi and adopted the Devanagari. It was therefore concluded that the same ought to be done in Behar. What was not generally known was this, that it was the complete expulsion of Kaithi from the village records (Patwari papers) of the North-Western Provinces that had led to the weakening of the Indigenous schools of those parts, and the easy substitution to some extent of the Hulkabundi [Government] schools in their place. In Behar, where the settlement of the land revenue was permanent, and the Government had no concern with the Patwari papers, no force like that which had acted in the North-Western Provinces was employed to thrust the popular character out of use. The Indigenous pathshalas of Behar had thus been able to hold their own. It was considered a great boon, therefore, when the Government of Bengal, after ruling in April 1880 that the character thenceforward to be used in the Courts should be Nagri or Kaithi and not Persian, sanctioned and carried out measures for casting a fount of Kaithi type. Thus has originated an impetus to Vernacular education in Behar, which may be expected to yield results little short of those which followed in Bengal on the abolition of Persian and the introduction of Bengali in 1839.'

65. One explanation for the separate policies of the governments of the North-Western Provinces and of Oudh towards the Kaithi script lay in their different approaches towards the appointment of *patwārīs*. In the NWP the government appointed these village officials, and never selected those who knew only Kaithi. In Oudh, on the other hand, local landholders, with no aversion to Kaithi, appointed them. Similar conditions obtained in Bihar, where the permanent settlement of the land revenue meant the government had no concern with *patwārī* papers; there too *patwārīs* continued to use the Kaithi script. *Educ Comm Rpt Bengal*, pp. 46–7; *Oudh Educ Rpt*, 1873–74, p. 150; *NWP&O Educ Rpt*, 1880–81, pp. 77–8.
66. I could find only one mention of a government school teaching any such script in any of the annual education reports for the NWP&O throughout the entire period of their publication (1843–44 to 1946–47): a municipal school in Pilibhit (western NWP&O) was reported to have a Mahajani department. *NWP&O Educ Rpt*, 1879–80, p. 19.
67. *NWP&O Gen Admin Progs*, October 1900, pp. 93–4, 102. See D. T. Roberts, *Report on the Revision of Records of Part of Ballia District. 1882–1885 A.D.* (Allahabad, 1886) for a lengthy discussion of the value of the Kaithi script by one member of the Board of Revenue.
68. See Note 64.
69. *Oudh Educ Rpt*, 1871–72, Appendix E, p. i.
70. *Ibid.*, 1874–75, Appendix I, p. xiii.
71. *NWP&O Educ Rpt*, 1879–80; p. 57; *Ibid.*, 1881–82, p. 75. No mention of the teaching of Kaithi in Oudh appeared in any of the annual education reports of the NWP&O after the 1887–88 report. See also Note 64.
72. Chatterji, 'The Government's Attitude', p. 25.
73. *NWP&O Educ Rpt*, 1856–57/1857–58, pp. 32–3. See also Note 64 in this chapter.

74. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1861–62, pp. 21–2.
75. *Oudh Educ Rpt*, 1869–70, p. 21.
76. *Ibid.*, 1871–72, Appendix E, p. i.
77. *NWP&O SVN*, 1883, p. 663.
78. *Ibid.*, 1883, p. 887.
79. *Ibid.*, 1900, p. 283. The name of the script given in this source is 'Muria' which I have taken to be 'mūḍiyā'. The latter word means 'shaven-headed' as does the word 'muṇḍā', which also means a script which leaves out the special diacriticals used to indicate consonant-vowel combinations in the Nagari script.
80. *NPS 9th Ann Rpt*, pp. 14–15.
81. Nesfield added: '... and this is an additional argument for having Kaithi taught in our schools.' Chatterji, 'The Government's Attitude', p. 30, quoting letter from the Director of Public Instruction Oudh to the Junior Secretary of the Chief Commissioner Oudh, 26 March 1876.
82. *The Calcutta Gazette*, 16 June 1880, p. 503.
83. George A. Grierson, *A Handbook of the Kayathi Character* (Calcutta, 1881), p. 1.
84. *Appendix to The Calcutta Gazette*, 9 January 1884, pp. 38–9; *Bengal Quarterly Pubs Rpt*, 1882; *Educ Comm Rpt Bengal*, pp. 117, 334; *NWP&O Educ Rpt*, 1880–81, p. 75.
85. *Educ Comm Rpt Bengal*, pp. 46–7. Also see the section of Chapter V entitled 'Indigenous Schools in the North-Western Provinces'.
86. *UP SVN*, 1912, p. 1072.
87. *Ibid.*, 1913, p. 715.
88. See Chapter V for a discussion of the role of the Hunter Commission in the Hindi-Nagari campaign.
89. *Educ Comm Rpt Bengal*, p. 334. At the time of his testimony before the Commission, Dr Mitra had been a member of the Calcutta Schoolbook Society for 27 years, the Director of the Government Wards' Institution for 25, a Fellow of Calcutta University for 25, as well as being the President of the Central Textbook Committee, and Joint Secretary and Treasurer to the Industrial Art School. *Educ Comm Rpt Bengal*, p. 329.
90. See the section of Chapter II entitled 'The Language of Poetry: Braj Bhasha vs. Khari Boli'. See also Christopher R. King, 'Forging a New Linguistic Identity: The Hindi Movement in Banaras 1868–1914', in Sandria B. Freitag, editor, *Culture and Power in Banaras: Community, Performance, and Environment, 1800–1980* (Berkeley, 1989), especially pp. 189–93.
91. The Central Provinces, which came into existence in 1861 and incorporated the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories, lay in the hilly plateau region of central India to the south of the NWP&O. This area is now divided largely between the states of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. See also Note 27.
92. R. M. Sinha, 'An Old Document Dealing with Hindi-Urdu Controversy', *Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission*, XXXIV, Part II (1958), pp. 91–3.
93. *CP Home Progs*, March 1872, No. 37, p. 47.
94. See Chapter IV, especially the section entitled 'The Relationship of Education and Employment'.

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95. T. W. Clark, 'The Languages of Calcutta, 1760-1840', London University, School of Oriental and African Studies, *Bulletin*, XVIII (1956), pp. 473-4.
96. The Bengali and Nagari scripts have both descended from a common ancestor. The shapes of the letters and their order of occurrence in the two alphabets, while not identical, show strong resemblances. Equally important, both languages have borrowed heavily from Sanskrit. Also see the section entitled 'The Language of School Textbooks' in Chapter IV.
97. Keatinge did not make it clear that Hindustani and Marathi in the Nagari and Marathi scripts respectively had been the languages and scripts used in the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories before British rule. He also erroneously described Shore's language policy as a change from Persian to *Hindi*, rather than *Hindustani*, in the Nagari script. See the section entitled 'The Nagari Script in the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories' in this chapter.
98. *CP Admin Rpt*, 1871-72, xvi-xvii; *CP Home Progs*, March 1872, No. 39, p. 50.
99. *CP Home Progs*, March 1872, No. 39, pp. 50-1.
100. *Ibid.*, March 1872, No. 39, pp. 50-2.
101. *CP Admin Rpt*, 1871-72, p. xviii. The use of 'the Hindi character' in the one case, and 'Hindi' in the other suggests a confusion between language and script which sometimes plagued British policy at even the highest levels. See the section of Chapter V entitled 'The 1900 Decision: The Machinery of Deliberation', for a particularly glaring example of this on the part of the Government of India.
102. *Educ Comm Rpt CP*, pp. 173-4.
103. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
104. *NWP&O SVN*, 1885, p. 489.
105. Handwritten comments of C. J. Lyall on a Minute Paper, subject Home Department Judicial Proceedings for June 1900, *Judicial and Public Papers*, 555 (21-71); C. J. Lyall, *A Sketch of the Hindustani Language* (Edinburgh, 1880).
106. Bihar became a separate province in 1912; prior to that it was a sub-province of Bengal.
107. Chatterji, 'The Government's Attitude', *passim*.
108. *Bengal Gen Progs Misc*, March 1881, p. 7; Rafiq A. Zakaria, 'Foreword', in N. S. Gorekar, *Glimpses of Urdu Literature* (Bombay, 1961), p. xix.
109. *NWP SVN*, 1873, p. 581; Zakaria, 'Foreword', p. xix.
110. Chatterji, 'The Government's Attitude', pp. 19-20.
111. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
112. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.
113. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
114. *Oudh Educ Rpt*, 1875-76, pp. 4-5.
115. *The Calcutta Gazette*, 16 June 1880, p. 503.
116. Chatterji, 'The Government's Attitude', p. 16.
117. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-2, 31-2.
118. *Bengal Gen Progs Misc*, March 1881, p. 8; Zakaria, 'Foreword', p. xxii.
119. See the section of this chapter entitled 'Indian Reactions to the Replacement of Persian'.
120. 'Correspondence on the Subject of the Education of the Muhammadan

Community in British India and Their Employment in the Public Service Generally', *SRGI, Home Department*, No. CCV, Home Department Serial No. 2 (Calcutta, 1886), pp. 243–4.

121. *Ibid.*, p. 278.
122. See the section of Chapter V entitled 'The 1900 Decision: The Machinery of Deliberation', for an extended discussion of the confused thinking surrounding the NWP&O resolution of 1900 officially recognizing the Nagari script.
123. *Bharat Jivan* (Banaras), 10 April 1893, pp. 3–4.
124. F. S. Growse, 'The Etymology of Local Names in Northern India, as Exemplified in the District of Mathura', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, XLIII, Part I (1874), pp. 320, 326; *Educ Comm Rpt NWP&O*, p. 436. One can judge from the Sanskrit publishing statistics in Table 1 just how inaccurate this perception proved to be.
125. *Educ Comm Rpt NWP&O*, p. 437.
126. The princely state of Hyderabad in south India, a stronghold of Urdu, might seem to be an exception. The Urdu of Hyderabad, however, did not derive from the local vernaculars, though its earlier Dakani form borrowed heavily from their vocabulary, but rather from the same Khari Boli base as Urdu in north India. In other words, the grammatical basis of Hyderabad Urdu was imported from north India.
127. S. K. Chatterji, *Indo-Aryan and Hindi*, 2nd edition (Calcutta, 1960), p. 325; T. W. Clark, 'The Languages of Calcutta', p. 454.
128. Paul Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India* (Cambridge, 1974), pp. 287–8; Raghunandan Shastri, *Panjāb mē Hindī kī Pragati, passim.*
129. Nandalal Chatterji, 'A Forgotten Official Enquiry on the Hindi-Urdu Controversy', Indian Historical Records Commission, *Proceedings*, XXX (1954), p. 31.
130. *Kāśī-Nāgarīpracārīnī Sabhā kā Arddhśatābdi-Itihās [The Fiftieth Anniversary History of the Kashi Society for the Promotion of Nagari]* (Kāśī, [1943]), pp. 127–9.
131. *NWP SVN*, 1873, pp. 580–1.
132. Syamacharan Ganguli, 'Hindi, Hindustani, and the Behar Dialects', *The Calcutta Review*, LXXV (1882), p. 36. Between 1880 and 1883 Ganguli and George A. Grierson, a Bengal civil servant later to become renowned as the author of the huge *Linguistic Survey of India*, carried on a heated debate on the issue of the proper official language of Bihar in the pages of the *Review*. Grierson maintained that the three major regional dialects of Bihar—Maithili, Magadhi and Bhojpuri—should be the official languages of Bihar. Ganguli objected on the basis that such a policy would prevent the natural spread of 'Hindustani', which took the form of Urdu among Muslims and Hindi among Hindus, as the lingua franca of India. Were the same principles to be applied in Europe, he concluded Italy would have two cultivated languages, Spain several, and Provencal would be revived in France. Ganguli, 'Hindi', pp. 29–33.
133. Chatterji, 'The Government's Attitude', p. 14, quoting A. W. Croft, 'Hindi as the Court Language of Behar', 16 June 1875. Chatterji gives no further information on the source of the document.

CHAPTER IV

Language, Education and Employment

The question whether Urdu or Hindi has the better claim to be called the mother tongue of these Provinces . . . is not of much practical importance, as the duty of Government is simply to provide instruction in either language, or in both, where it is wanted . . .¹

Introduction

In nineteenth century north India government policies regarding language, education, and employment for the educated had close relationships. The chief value of schooling for most Indians lay in the supposed power of education to open the portals of government service or the legal profession. The educated composed only a tiny fraction of the population, and those educated in English made up only a small fraction of those schooled in the vernaculars. Among educated Indians certain religious and caste groups predominated, and most of these had strong ties with one or another language and script.

Therefore, government language policies giving certain languages and scripts official status had great influence on the aspirations of the educated, particularly those literate in the vernaculars. At the same time, government education policies which encouraged the development of more than one vernacular at the primary and secondary levels helped to create opposing classes with vested interests in the language and script of their choice. Government officials as well as Indians in general regarded the vernaculars as inferior to English as well as to the classical languages from which they derived their scripts and much of their vocabulary. As a result, the vernaculars did not become mediums of instruction in higher education until the 1920s in most institutions.

In much of north India, government policies towards the languages of education and the languages of administration displayed a fair degree of congruence by the 1870s and 1880s. In Bengal, at one end of the spectrum posited in the last chapter, Bengali and the Bengali script dominated the vernacular education system and held the status of official vernacular in the administrative system. In the Punjab, at the other end, Urdu had the same status. In both the Central Provinces and Bihar, Hindi in the Nagari or Kaithi script had achieved a commanding

position in both education and officialdom. Only in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh did the situation show a more ambivalent pattern throughout our period. Here, on the one hand British educational policies generated significant numbers of Indians educated in either Hindi or Urdu, while on the other hand administrative policies favoured Urdu in the Urdu (Persian) script² as the official vernacular. These conflicting policies provided one important reason for the greater intensity of the Hindi-Nagari movement in the NWP&O than anywhere else in north India. This chapter and the next, therefore, will focus chiefly on trends and events in this province, with occasional references to other areas.

A detailed study of the geographical and social patterns of language study in both indigenous and government schools reveals some significant facts about the social origins of the Hindi movement. The membership of the most important voluntary association devoted to the advancement of Hindi and Nagari in the nineteenth century NWP&O, the Nagari Pracharini Sabha (Society for the Promotion of Nagari) of Banaras, showed almost identical geographical and social origins (see Chapter V). Similarly, the geographical patterns of vernacular publishing surveyed earlier parallel those of the schools and of the Sabha (see Chapter II). Simply put, in the western NWP and in Oudh, areas more deeply influenced by Muslim rule, Urdu held the dominant position, while in the eastern NWP, an area profoundly affected by the great traditional centres of Hinduism, Allahabad and Banaras, Hindi had greater strength.

Not surprisingly, the heart of the Hindi-Nagari movement lay in the east. Here developed the premier Hindi organizations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries respectively—the Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras, founded in 1893, and the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan (Society for Hindi Literature), founded in 1910. This part of the province experienced the greatest disparity between the rates of social mobilization and assimilation, and consequently the largest differentiation between Hindus and Muslims. Here the equations of Hindi = Hindu and Urdu = Muslim received the greatest emphasis, and here Hindus made the greatest efforts on behalf of the Hindi language and the Nagari script.

Attitudes Towards the Vernaculars

The Hindi-Nagari movement did not become important in the NWP&O until the 1860s; the 1840s and 1850s saw no significant agitation even in the eastern heartland. While prose models of highly Sanskritized Khari Boli Hindi existed (see Chapter II), the British educational system in the

province, which had barely begun on the primary and secondary levels by 1850, had not yet widely disseminated this style of Khari Boli through government-patronized schoolbooks. No class of educated Hindi speakers, committed to a style of the Khari Boli continuum which differentiated them from Urdu speakers, had yet arisen. To find statements by Hindus educated in the Sanskrit tradition denying the existence of this new style of Khari Boli, then, should come as no surprise.

In 1847, Dr J. R. Ballantyne, Principal of the English department of Benares College,⁵ decided to improve the style of what he termed 'Hindi' written by students of the Sanskrit College (which formed the older part of the institution). His efforts, stimulated by repeated complaints in the College records, took several forms. He ordered exercises to be written in Hindi by some of his students, then proposed that they should meet with the Hindi pandit for an hour a week, and finally losing his patience with the apathy and resistance he encountered, directed them to write an essay on the following question: 'Why do you despise the culture of the language which you speak every day of your lives, of the only language which your mothers and sisters understand?'⁶ His students, taken by surprise, responded with an address, asking him why he assumed they had such contempt for their vernacular. A dialogue ensued which made clear that the young men had neither a clear conception of what Ballantyne meant by Hindi nor any sense of loyalty to it.

As the reply of their spokesman showed, the students had no awareness of Hindi in the sense of a standardized literary dialect:

We do not clearly understand what you Europeans mean by the term Hindi, for there are hundreds of dialects, all in our opinion equally entitled to the name, and there is here no standard as there is in Sanskrit.⁵

Nor did they have a keen sense of the origins of the various words they used in their speech:

If the purity of Hindi is to consist in its exclusion of Mussulman [Muslim] words, we shall require to study Persian and Arabic in order to ascertain which of the words we are in the habit of issuing every day, is Arabic or Persian, and which is Hindi.⁶

Finally, they had no sense of attachment to Ballantyne's 'Hindi' or in other words, they accepted the equation Urdu = Hindu + Muslim:

... what you call the Hindi will eventually merge in some future modification of the Oordoo [Urdu], nor do we see any great cause of regret in this prospect.⁷

These attitudes have particular significance when we realize that less

than five decades later, Hindu students at the same college founded the Nagari Pracharini Sabha to promote Hindi and the Nagari script. Thus at the midpoint of the century, no Hindi movement existed in the very city which later became its most important centre. In terms of our theoretical framework, Hindi speakers at this time constituted an ethnic group whose members gave little or no subjective importance to their objective distinctness. By the time of the founding of the Sabha, however, Hindi speakers had begun to show some of the characteristics of a community—awareness of a common identity, and attempts to define boundaries.⁸

Dr Ballantyne's reaction to the views of his students demonstrated his ardent support of Hindi. He urged them to take up the task of forming the 'national language' and to create a standard literature using a uniform system of grammar and spelling. If the pandits of Banaras valued the reputation of their city, he added, they should exert themselves to make its dialect the standard for all India by writing books 'which should attract the attention and form the taste of all their fellow countrymen'.⁹ He made a beginning himself, arranging for the translation of several works from Sanskrit into Hindi, but received little encouragement. In response to a request for aid, the Government of the NWP&O remarked that if Hindi meant a language which admitted only Sanskrit words, then its improvement would always deserve much less attention than that of Urdu.¹⁰ Ballantyne's almost prophetic vision prevailed in the end, however, for Banaras eventually became the leading centre of Hindi publication, and in 1900 the provincial government began to aid the literary efforts of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha with an annual grant.¹¹

Although Urdu's position as court language meant greater status than Hindi, neither vernacular compared favourably with the classical languages of Arabic, Persian or Sanskrit in the eyes of many Indians. Ballantyne noted in 1849 that his students grudged the time spent in learning Urdu because they could expect praise at home for learning classical languages or English, but not for Urdu.¹² In 1864 an educational official of the NWP cited the testimony of Syed Ahmed Khan, an eminent scholar and administrator, that many of his fellow Muslim scholars strongly disliked reading Urdu, while three years later an Indian educational official also from the NWP wrote that his educated countrymen did not like having Urdu taught to their sons.¹³ Shiva Prasad, a Joint Inspector of the Department of Public Instruction of the NWP, summed up a view of the vernaculars that persists even today in India.¹⁴

Sanskrit and Arabic, he argued, had the same relationship to Hindi and Urdu that Greek and Latin had to English. When students learned Sanskrit and Arabic, their knowledge of the vernaculars became more 'sound and polished'.¹⁵

British government officials shared this low opinion of the vernaculars as mediums for higher education or literature. In 1867, for example, the British Indian Association of the North-Western Provinces¹⁶ petitioned the Viceroy, pleading for the use of 'the Vernacular' (meaning Urdu) in higher education. The Association asked for the creation of either a Vernacular Department for the University of Calcutta or of an independent Vernacular University for the NWP.¹⁷ The petitioners clearly indicated that they did not desire a return to the 'effete arts and sciences' of Oriental languages, but rather sought modern content through a vernacular medium.¹⁸ The Government of India replied that while some progress had been made in enriching the vernaculars, chiefly through translations of European works, they still lacked sufficient materials to be suitable for higher education. Hence, for some time to come Indians could acquire a liberal education in European science and literature only through English. Despite this attitude, however, the Government of India did aid the enrichment of the vernaculars making yearly grants to the provincial governments for the encouragement of appropriate literature; the purchase of vernacular works by the provincial education departments served the same end.¹⁹

In the Punjab the vernaculars fared somewhat better in higher education, due largely to the determined efforts of Lieutenant-Governor (1865–1870) Donald McLeod.²⁰ He patronized the Anjuman-i-Panjab, an organization founded in 1865 to revive Oriental learning and to spread useful knowledge to all classes of Indians through the vernaculars. The founder of the Anjuman, Dr G. W. Leitner, hired by McLeod to be the Principal of Lahore Government College, soon announced the chief goal of the organization—the foundation of an Oriental university.²¹ The Anjuman, supported by McLeod, proposed a curriculum which emphasized the classical languages of Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit, assumed instruction in the medium of the vernacular languages of the Punjab (Urdu, Hindi and Punjabi), and called for English language training only as a final addition. In 1870 Punjab University College came into being; its most important division, the Oriental College, embodied the aims of the Anjuman. The vernacular languages had become mediums of higher education in the Punjab.²²

Within two decades, however, the temporary surge of 'Orientalism'

in the Punjab had come to an end. Despite the elevation of Punjab University College, an affiliate of the University of Calcutta, to Punjab University, an independent degree-granting institution, in 1882, the vernacular languages lost out to English even in the Oriental College. Both British and Indian attitudes played a role in this advancement of English. British educational officials had long opposed the use of vernaculars in higher education, and when Sir Charles Aitchison²³ became Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab in 1881, they acquired a powerful new ally. Aitchison emphasized the importance of primary education and did not consider the vernaculars fit mediums for higher education. Many English-educated Indians in the Punjab also opposed a vernacular-medium Oriental university which they believed would handicap them in the competition for the most prestigious (and English-requiring) government positions. In 1880 a student revolt took place at Punjab University College, centred around the same issue, and the vernacular press became a forum for the question of the proper nature of the provincial university. By the end of the decade, the vernaculars had lost their place, even in the Oriental College. An ironic twist was the public declaration in 1888 by Dr M. Aurel Stein, Leitner's successor as Registrar of Punjab University, that the study of India's sacred texts could best be accomplished through the medium of English!²⁴

In the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, the founding of the University of Allahabad in 1887, the only university in the province until the creation of Banaras Hindu University in 1916, brought no change in the position of the vernaculars. University officials, both British and Indian, did not consider Urdu and Hindi worthy enough to merit inclusion in regular degree courses as subjects in their own right until 1923,²⁵ and never contemplated their use as mediums of instruction. A critic of this policy pointed out that even the University of Calcutta allowed candidates to choose Hindi as a second language in the Entrance Examination.²⁶

Only two institutions of higher learning in the province used either of the vernaculars as a medium of instruction or subject of study before the twentieth century. The Oriental Department of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College of Aligarh, founded in 1875 by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, used Urdu as the medium of instruction. (The enrolment of this division equalled only a small fraction of that in the English Department).²⁷ Central Hindu College, founded in Banaras in 1898, included Hindi (along with Sanskrit and English) in the curriculum.²⁸ The vernaculars did poorly in higher education not only because of British

opposition, but also because of widespread sentiment among educated Indians that, as Shiva Prasad declared, 'English being the language of our rulers, and having all its advantages attached to it, is . . . the means of all improvement and elevation'.²⁹ Clearly, those who wished to attach value to the symbols of either Hindi or Urdu had to contend with attitudes that denigrated the vernaculars, attitudes that persist even today.

Indigenous Schools in the North-Western Provinces

The vernaculars fared better in the indigenous schools of the province. In the mid-nineteenth century, when British educational efforts had barely begun, those who learned Arabic, Persian, Hindi or Sanskrit, and a variety of other subjects, studied for the most part in these institutions. One of the earliest pictures of their nature comes from a mid-1840s district by district survey of the provincial government carried out with an eye to establishing a large-scale primary education system. Although suffering from a number of faults,³⁰ the survey nonetheless showed a consistent picture of the linguistic and social elements of indigenous schools.

One of the most thoroughly researched districts, Agra, in the western NWP, presented features of considerable significance for understanding the origins of the Hindi movement and the opposing forces. The author of the report for this district, C. C. Fink, like his colleagues in other districts, divided indigenous schools into four categories: Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit and Hindi. Hindi schools (128) outnumbered all the rest put together. Persian schools (85) came next, while Sanskrit (6) and Arabic (1) ran a distant third and fourth.³¹ Each category of schools displayed distinct social configurations; both teachers and pupils came from certain definite religious or caste groups. Each category also exhibited striking differences in the aspirations of its students, and in their rural or urban origins.

The Hindi schools usually depended on whole communities or large sections of communities for their support, and their teachers received less remuneration than their counterparts in Persian schools. Those Hindi teachers who were Brahmans usually added to their income by also acting as priests. Fink believed that the lower income of teachers in Hindi schools made them more open to accepting the guidance and assistance of the government, noting that proportionately many more of these schools than Persian schools used government-supplied texts. While nearly a quarter (30) of the Hindi schools included Sanskrit³² as

part of their curriculum, the great majority taught simple arithmetic, the keeping of agricultural or commercial accounts, and the reading and writing of the Devanagari script along with its cursive variants Kaithi and Mahajani. Only a small minority of the Hindi schools (18) were located in Agra city, and only a few of the 130 teachers (14 Kayasths and 1 Rajputs) were not Brahmans. (See Table 6). Brahmans (510), Baniyas (538), and Rajputs (151) composed the bulk of the 1406 students, while Kayasths (59), Muslims (20), and other Hindus of various castes (128) made up the rest. (See Table 7). Most of the students in these schools aspired only to humble occupations such as being a shopkeeper or a *patwārī* (keeper of village land records). In sum, in Hindi schools mostly Brahman teachers taught arithmetic and writing chiefly to Brahmans, Baniyas, and Rajputs who lived in villages and hoped for modest local positions.³³

The Persian schools described in the report usually depended on individual heads of families for support, and their teachers generally received more compensation than their Hindi counterparts. The curriculum of these schools laid special emphasis on various forms of correspondence, which Fink considered a reflection of the days of Muslim rule when the courts used Persian for their business, and the higher classes of society used the same language for their private correspondence. The deficiencies of the teachers led them to translate the daily lessons to their pupils verbatim without any regard for the idiom of Urdu, observed Fink, which accounted for 'the barbarous application of Persian idiom to the Urdu language' found in court papers.³⁴ The study of Persian, continued his report, derived its importance to the clientele of these schools from the use of Urdu as the court language, since people wrongly believed that no one could learn Urdu without knowing Persian.³⁵

The majority of the Persian schools (53) were located in Agra city, and the great majority of their teachers were Muslims (75) while the rest were Kayasths (10). Of the 740 students, a little more than half were Muslims (393), a little over a quarter Kayasths (195), while the remainder consisted of Brahmans (46), Baniyas (39), Rajputs (37), and other Hindus (30). Students in Persian schools usually looked to government service to earn their living and took longer to complete their studies than students in Hindi schools. In short, in Persian schools mainly Muslim teachers taught Persian chiefly to Muslims and Kayasths who usually lived in cities and contemplated government service careers.³⁶

TABLE 6
Teachers in Persian and Hindi Schools of Agra District c. 1845

	Persian Schools	Hindi Schools	Total
Muslims	75 (100 %) [88 %]	—	75 (100 %) [35 %]
Kayasths	10 (41.5 %) [12 %]	14 (58.5 %) [11 %]	24 (100 %) [11 %]
Brahmans	—	115 (100 %) [88.5 %]	115 (100 %) [53.5 %]
Baniyas	—	—	—
Rajputs	—	1 (100 %) [1 %]	1 (100 %) [0.5 %]
Others	—	—	—
Total	85 (40 %) [100 %]	130 (60 %) [100.5 %]	215 (100 %) [100 %]

Note: All percentages have been calculated to the nearest 0.5 %. All figures have been compiled from the *NWP&O Education Report 1844–45*, Appendix I.

TABLE 7
Students in Persian and Hindi Schools of Agra District c. 1845

	Persian Schools	Hindi Schools	Total
Muslims	393 (95 %) [53 %]	20 (5 %) [1.5 %]	413 (100 %) [19 %]
Kayasths	195 (77 %) [26.5 %]	59 (23 %) [4 %]	254 (100 %) [12 %]
Brahmans	46 (8.5 %) [6 %]	510 (91.5 %) [36.5 %]	556 (100 %) [26 %]
Baniyas	39 (7 %) [5.5 %]	538 (93 %) [38.5 %]	577 (100 %) [27 %]
Rajputs	37 (19.5 %) [5 %]	151 (80.5 %) [11 %]	188 (100 %) [9 %]
Others	30 (19 %) [4 %]	128 (81 %) [9 %]	158 (100 %) [7.5 %]
Total	740 (34.5 %) [100 %]	1406 (65.5 %) [100.5 %]	2146 (100 %) [100.5 %]

Note: All percentages have been calculated to the nearest 0.5 %. All figures have been compiled from the *NWP&O Education Report 1844–45*, Appendix I.

If one compares the statistics for Hindi and Persian schools (see Tables 6 and 7) several interesting patterns emerge. No Muslim teachers taught in Hindi schools and only a tiny fraction of all Muslim students (5 per cent) studied in Hindi schools. No non-Kayasth Hindus taught in Persian schools, and only a small portion of non-Kayasth Hindu students (10 per cent) studied in Persian schools. Although the proportion of Kayasth teachers in Hindi schools (59 per cent) vis-a-vis Persian schools (41 per cent) almost exactly equalled the ratio of Hindi (60 per cent) to Persian (40 per cent) schools, the large majority of Kayasth students (77 per cent) studied in Persian schools.

In district after district the pattern repeated itself: Muslims and Kayasths dominated the Persian schools, while non-Kayasth Hindus, especially Brahmans, Baniyas and Rajputs dominated the Hindi schools. The social composition of the indigenous schools clearly showed that the equation Urdu (or Persian) = Hindu + Muslim held good, but only for certain Hindus, while the equation Hindi = Hindu + Muslim had less validity, true for many Hindus but only for a insignificant minority of Muslims. This general picture remained valid for the rest of the century among educated Hindus and Muslims in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh.³⁷

Sanskrit and Arabic schools reflected the same features which appeared in their more popular counterparts and in the province as a whole the former outnumbered the latter. Fink reported six purely Sanskrit schools in Agra district, three in the city and three in villages. All of the teachers were Brahmans, of whom only one was paid. The others supported themselves by copying almanacs, reciting scriptures, and performing other priestly duties. Of the 71 students who attended these schools, all but 2 were Brahmans who intended to become village priests. Sanskrit schools in other districts showed similar characteristics: teachers and students were almost always Brahmans.³⁸ Though Fink wrote nothing about the solitary Arabic school in his district, the comments of investigators in other districts clearly indicated that teachers and students in Arabic schools were almost always Muslims.³⁹

Government Schools in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh

In the NWP the creation of the government educational system began at the top. First came Benares Sanskrit College in 1772, followed by Agra College in 1823, Bareilly College in 1837, and Roorkee College in 1847.⁴⁰ Delhi College, founded in 1792, remained part of the system of higher education in the province until 1857, and several private colleges

had come into existence before 1857 as well.⁴¹ Government-initiated primary and secondary education did not begin until the 1840s under the vigorous leadership of Lieutenant-Governor James Thomason who envisioned creating a system based on the already existing indigenous schools.⁴² By 1860 a network of *halkabandī* schools (village institutions supported by an educational cess on the land revenue) and *tahsīlī* schools (similar institutions located at the headquarters of *tahsīls*, revenue divisions) had spread across every district of the NWP and tens of thousands of students were attending classes.⁴³ In Oudh, which first came under direct British rule in 1856, the rebellion of 1857 and its aftermath prevented settled administration until 1859, and the government educational system did not develop until 1863, when a system including 10 *zīlā* (district) schools, 34 *tahsīlī* schools, and Canning College in Lucknow was sanctioned. Within five years, more than 30,000 students were studying in schools managed or inspected by the government.⁴⁴

In the North-Western Provinces as well as Oudh, the curriculum in primary and secondary schools included from the beginning either or both of Hindi and Urdu, along with other languages such as Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit. Government education statistics from the 1860s reveal several significant aspects of the varying popularity of these languages in different regions of the province and the social origins of those who studied them. In the NWP (see Table 8) the majority of students studied Hindu-heritage languages, a large minority Islamic-heritage languages,⁴⁵ and a very small minority English. In Oudh the proportions differed: the majority of students studied Islamic-heritage languages, a large minority Hindu-heritage languages, and a small minority English. The greater popularity of Islamic-heritage languages in Oudh—especially Persian—undoubtedly stemmed from the recently-ended period of Muslim rule. The prestige of Persian remained high to the 1890s. In 1881 the Educational Department had to admit this language into the curriculum of middle class schools to avoid a disastrous drop in attendance, and in 1887 an official reported that ‘the irrepressible mania for the study of Persian’ had only recently begun to abate.⁴⁶

Other educational statistics from the NWP showed a definite correlation between urban residence and the study of Islamic-heritage languages on the one hand, and rural residence and the study of Hindu-heritage languages on the other. (See Table 9.) In *halkabandī* schools, usually located in villages, the overwhelming majority of students took

TABLE 8
Numbers of Students in Language Classes in Different Regions of
the NWP in Schools of All Levels in 1860

Region	English	Islamic- Heritage	Hindu- Heritage	Other	Total
West NWP	997 [1.7 %]	32,043 [53.9 %]	26,417 [44.4 %]	—	59,457 [100.0 %]
Central NWP	1,395 [2.8 %]	9,544 [19.1 %]	39,052 [78.1 %]	— [100.0 %]	49,991
East NWP	1,279 [3.1 %]	10,887 [26.6 %]	28,700 [70.2 %]	34 [0.1 %]	40,900 [100.0 %]
Other	379 [2.8 %]	5,222 [37.9 %]	7,665 [55.7 %]	496 [3.6 %]	13,762 [100.0 %]
TOTAL	4,050 [2.5 %]	57,696 [35.2 %]	101,834 [62.1 %]	530 [0.3 %]	164,110 [100.1 %]

Note: All percentages have been calculated to the nearest 0.1 %. *West NWP* = the 1st Educational Circle, i.e., the districts of Aligarh, Bijnor, Budaun, Bulandshahr, Dehra Dun, Meerut, Moradabad, Muzaffarnagar, Saharanpur, Shajahanpur, Bareilly, Kumaun and Garhwal. *Central NWP* = the 2nd Educational Circle, i.e., the districts of Agra, Etah, Etawah, Farrukabad, Hamirpur, Jalaun, Jhansi, Kanpur, Mainpuri and Mathura. *East NWP* = the 3rd Educational Circle, i.e., the districts of Allahabad, Azamgarh, Banda, Banaras, Fatehpur, Ghazipur, Gorakhpur, Jaunpur and Mirzapur. *Other* = the 4th Educational Circle, i.e., various districts in the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories and in Ajmer-Merwara, all later detached from the NWP. *Other* for languages includes Bengali, Marathi and Latin. All figures have been compiled from the *NWP Education Report 1859-60*, Appendix A, 2-62. Islamic-heritage languages include Arabic, Persian and Urdu, and Koran schools. Hindu-heritage languages include Hindi, Sanskrit and Hindi taught in Kaithi and other cursive forms of the Nagari. The figures in this table include both schools directly managed by the government and those only inspected by the government.

Hindi or Sanskrit. In *tahsili* schools, usually located in small towns, students of Hindu-heritage languages became a smaller majority while those studying Islamic-heritage languages became a larger minority. In the four government colleges, all located in medium-sized or large cities, almost half the pupils studied English, a language of little importance in the lower-level institutions. A large minority studied Islamic-heritage languages, and a small minority Hindu-heritage languages.⁴⁷

TABLE 9
Numbers of Students in Language Classes in Different Levels of Schools
in the North-Western Provinces in 1860

Level of School	English	Islamic-Heritage	Hindu-Heritage	Total
Halkabandī	4 [0.1 %]	9,296 [14.1 %]	56,791 [85.9 %]	66,091 [100.1 %]
Tahsīlī	53 [0.3 %]	6,167 [35.7 %]	11,074 [64.0 %]	17,294 [100.0 %]
Colleges	1,011 [49.4 %]	702 [34.3 %]	334 [16.3 %]	2,047 [100.0 %]
TOTAL	1,068 [1.3 %]	16,165 [18.9 %]	68,199 [79.8 %]	85,432 [100.0 %]

Note: All percentages have been calculated to the nearest 0.1 %. Note that unlike the preceding table, this table includes only institutions under the direct management of the government. The four government colleges were located at Agra, Banaras, Bareilly and Roorkee. All figures were compiled from the *NWP Education Report, 1859-60*, Appendix A, 2-62.

Writing in 1874, Sir John Strachey, the Lieutenant-Governor of the NWP, testified to this state of affairs when he remarked that the higher one went in the educational system, the greater the number of boys learning English and Urdu, and the smaller the number learning English and Hindi. From this he inferred that the lower classes, especially in the villages, spoke mostly Hindi while Urdu held sway in the towns, and had 'greater vogue' among the more cultivated classes.⁴⁸ Although Strachey oversimplified matters, since the rural masses usually spoke one of the regional standards of Hindi and not Sanskritized Khari Boli Hindi (see Chapter I), he accurately recognized the superiority of Urdu over Hindi in the educational system.

Parallel educational statistics from Oudh also showed the same correlation between the level of education and the study of different languages. (See Table 10.) Progression up the educational ladder from lower to middle to higher class schools and to Canning College, as in the NWP, meant not only residing in an increasingly urbanized environment, but also taking a greater proportion of English and Islamic-heritage languages. In short, in both provinces the study of Hindu-heritage languages diminished as years of schooling increased. In other words, these statistics suggest that in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, assimilation into Islamic-heritage languages had kept pace with social mobilization.

TABLE 10
Numbers of Students in Language Classes in Different Levels of Schools
in the Province of Oudh in 1869

Level of School	English	Islamic-Heritage	Hindu-Heritage	Total
Lower Class	—	10,639 [53.0 %]	9,434 [47.0 %]	20,073 [100.0 %]
Middle Class	2,093 [17.8 %]	6,642 [56.6 %]	3,001 [25.6 %]	17,736 [100.0 %]
Higher Class	1,011 [26.3 %]	702 [51.8 %]	334 [21.9 %]	2,047 [100.0 %]
Canning College	492 [41.0 %]	393 [49.4 %]	116 [9.7 %]	1,201 [100.1 %]
TOTAL	1,068 [8.6 %]	16,165 [54.0 %]	68,199 [37.4 %]	85,432 [100.0 %]

Note All percentages have been calculated to the nearest 0.1 %. Note that like the preceding table, this table includes only institutions under the direct management of the government, except for Canning College, which was a private institution aided by government. The figures for Canning College include both Canning College and the private school of higher class of the same name which formed an integral part of the college. All figures were compiled from the *Oudh Educ Rpt* 1868–9, Appendix A. This report was the first one available in the India Office Library and Records; earlier reports could not be found.

Perhaps the most important fact emerging from these educational statistics is the uneven regional distribution of language study patterns. In both Oudh (Table 10) and the western NWP (Table 8) a majority of students took Islamic-heritage languages and a large minority Hindu-heritage languages. In both these areas Muslim influence had been deeper, and in Oudh British rule had begun later than anywhere else in the two provinces. In the central and eastern parts of the NWP, on the other hand, very large majorities studied Hindu-heritage languages and modest minorities Islamic-heritage languages. In the easternmost part of the NWP—Banaras and several districts to the north—British rule had commenced a quarter-century earlier (1775) than elsewhere. Moreover, Banaras had long been one of the major centres of Hinduism. These historical and religious considerations go far to explain the patterns of language study above, and the parallel patterns of vernacular publishing (see Chapter II). In view of all this, the concentration of the

Hindi movement in the eastern part of the province with first Banaras and later Allahabad as the two major centres seems almost inevitable.

The Language of School Textbooks

When Fink wrote his report on indigenous schools in 1845, he included an analysis of the relationship of Urdu and Hindi which echoed the observations of Gilchrist half a century earlier (see Chapter I) and foreshadowed a difficulty which plagued education officials for decades to come. Fink argued that:

... the Urdu and Hindee are distinct languages, because although they agree in grammatical construction, they differ in almost every other respect; the Urdu deriving all its vocables, figures of speech, and rules of versification, and some of its rules of syntax, from the Persian, and the Hindee its, from the Sanscrit.²⁹

He predicted that either the two would blend into one, or that one of them would fall into disuse—better Urdu than Hindi, since fewer people used the former. With commendable concern but with considerable naivety, he recommended that the government should attempt to destroy the distinction between Hindi and Urdu and strive to create a 'universal language' spoken and understood equally well by the ignorant and the learned. Such a language, he opined, would facilitate the transmission of education from the higher to the lower classes. The sooner this occurred the better, since at present the government had to provide two books on every subject for the people, one in Hindi and one in Urdu.³⁰

Fink's remarks pointed directly to a basic contradiction in British language policy in education. On the one hand, the curriculum for government primary and secondary schools included both Urdu and Hindi from the very beginning in the NWP&O.³¹ (In the Punjab, by way of contrast, the primary curriculum did not include Hindi until 1917.)³² On the other hand, as we have seen, the great majority of British officials regarded Hindi as an artificially created language and the increasing divergence of Hindi and Urdu as pernicious. By recognizing Hindi as a medium of instruction on the primary and secondary levels, the government gave an enormous impetus to a process of differentiation between Urdu and Hindi that might otherwise have taken many decades longer.

Since the schools needed textbooks in both Hindi and Urdu, the government naturally turned to educated Hindus and Muslims to write them. These groups, usually designated as pandits and *maulvīs* in contemporary references, by all accounts laboured mightily to Sanskritize Hindi and Persianize Urdu. In some cases we would be more

accurate in saying that the pandits Sanskritized Khari Boli Urdu, for Hindu scholars 'translated' more than one textbook from the Urdu." In any case they already had models of Sanskritized Hindi (see Chapter II) whether translating or writing *de novo*. Once the process of creating textbooks had begun in earnest, the government proved unable to reverse the trend. In short, the very government whose officials decried the existence of Hindi had done a great deal to nourish this medium.

J. C. Nesfield, Director of Public Instruction in Oudh, made one of the most eloquent statements of the British dilemma in an 1876 report. He asserted that while Oudh had two different scripts, the Persian (Urdu) and the Nagari, the people spoke only one language, Urdu. While Urdu schoolbooks contained an accurate version of the vernacular, the Hindi texts contained something quite different.

These books, instead of using Hindustani [Urdu] words to express common objects and ideas, confine themselves to words of Sanskrit origin, which may have been common once, but are now obsolete and have been so for several centuries. The Hindustani language can borrow from two different sources, Perso-Arabic and Sanskrit. *But instead of encouraging and attempting to widen the common element, we have been doing our utmost to widen the differences*, and to create, under the name of Hindi, a language which no one speaks, and which no one, unless he has been specially educated, can interpret. . . . This is the weakest point in our educational policy. How we have been drawn into it, it is hard to say. Possibly our action may to some extent be ascribed to the example set in the North-Western Provinces and elsewhere; *possibly we have been too ready to fall into the groove prepared for us by pandits and pedants*. The antagonism of maulvis and pandits, each endeavouring to supersede the vernacular currency with words coined from their respective mints, has, no doubt, done much to widen the breach between Urdu and Hindi, and to give rise to the false impression that they are two different languages.³⁴

Though Nesfield seemed unaware of the regional standard Avadhi, undoubtedly far more widely spoken by the rural masses of Oudh than Urdu, he had accurately diagnosed the increasing differentiation between the two forms of Khari Boli.

Highly Sanskritized Hindi schoolbooks had already existed for several decades when Nesfield wrote. One of the most popular of these, *Bāl-Bodh* [*Lessons for Children*] first appeared in 1852 and went through twelve editions in the next thirty years.³⁵ The report of the Hunter (Indian Education) Commission, issued in 1883, criticized the Hindi readers then in use. As a result, Rama Shankar Misra, a Hindi scholar, was commissioned to draw up a new series which remained in use until 1895 when yet another series created by the Allahabad Literary

Institute replaced Misra's. This series too soon required revision on the basis of widespread complaints against its Sanskritized Hindi and resulting unintelligibility to students. In the meantime Misra's books regained their old position only to be once again supplanted in 1901 by the Institute's revised series. Misra protested and learned that the Hindi Sub-Committee of the Provincial Text-Book Committee considered his style objectionable. The Committee noted that he used Persian, Arabic, and Sanskrit words where simpler everyday expressions would have sufficed, and that he often employed a grotesque mixture of Persian and Sanskrit words in the same phrase.³⁶

The *mélange* of Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit which filled Misra's schoolbooks suggests that he may have been trying to comply with the government's policy of a 'common language' for elementary texts. This policy, enunciated by the government of the NWP in 1876, rested on the assumption that the educated classes spoke the same language, whether written in the Persian (Urdu) or in the Nagari script. The test of a proper elementary schoolbook, therefore, was that the contents could be printed 'without violence' in either script.³⁷ The provincial government reaffirmed the policy of preceding administrations in 1903, stating that only 'the language of every-day life . . . free alike from the peculiarities of dialects and the elaborations of the literary style', and written in either script, should be used for elementary texts.³⁸ By 'the language of every-day life' the government clearly did not mean to advocate the regional standards of language spoken by the overwhelming mass of the people, but rather a style of Khari Boli which did not employ excessive numbers of either Persian and Arabic or Sanskrit words. Something like the style of Devki Nandan Khatri (see Chapter II) was wanted, a style not at either extreme of the Khari Boli spectrum.

Within a decade, however, increasingly irreconcilable differences between Urdu and Hindi supporters forced the government to retreat from this principle. In 1907 the Provincial Text-Book Committee issued a fresh set of readers, calculated to better meet the official mandate for 'the common language'. A storm of criticism ensued, for the new style satisfied neither side; both condemned it as too poor and too bald to meet the needs of those students planning to continue their studies beyond the primary level. Critics derided the simplicity of the new subject matter as 'silly or offensive or useless'.³⁹

A year later a joint committee of the Hindi and Urdu Sub-Committees met to review the many criticisms and to once again revise the readers. At this point the provincial government decided to review

the whole question of the suitability of the primary education programme for the rural population, and the matter of the textbooks passed into the hands of a special Rural Education Committee in 1910. The proceedings of the new committee revealed a fundamental division of opinion. The majority passed a resolution to introduce simple passages in 'distinctive Urdu and Hindi' in the higher level of primary readers while retaining the lessons in 'the common language' on in the lower level. The minority, all Muslims, strongly dissented and refused to admit any need to differentiate the language to be used by Urdu and Hindi students even on the graduate level. After reviewing the proceedings, the government directed the committee not to compromise the principle of a common language and to rescind the resolution. Such discords made further progress impossible, and the committee never met again.⁶⁰

In 1913 the whole matter came up once more. The government of the United Provinces⁶¹ appointed an advisory Committee on Primary Education to consider a wide range of questions, among them the proper language of primary readers. The committee, twelve members in all, considered three points of view, one from the two Muslim members, and two from two of the four Hindu members. Asghar Ali Khan and Saiyid Abu Jafar, the Muslim members, strongly objected to even raising the issue, and contended that the government had already made its policy clear in previous statements: the language of all primary readers, whether in the Nagari or Persian (Urdu) scripts, had to be absolutely identical. In their opinion the Committee had no authority to consider the matter. Khan denied the existence of 'any such thing as [the] Hindi language in the sense . . . of any living language which has a fixed literary standard, is spoken and written, and is used in correspondence and in law courts'.⁶² The proponents of Hindi, he said, were reviving a long-dead language, understandable only to those knowing Sanskrit, to the harm of the true lingua franca of the country, Urdu or Hindustani. Urdu represented a compromise between Arabic and Persian on the one side and Sanskrit on the other; moreover Urdu had received official recognition.⁶³

The chairman, T. C. Piggott, overruled these objections and the Committee proceeded to discuss resolutions put forward by Ganga Prasad Varma, a prominent Khatri newspaper publisher of Lucknow, and Dr Sundar Lal, both important members of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras.⁶⁴ Varma proposed that two different sets of readers, each written by well-known Hindi and Urdu scholars, be prepared for

upper primary classes, one in the Nagari and one in the Persian (Urdu) script. He spoke of Urdu and Hindi as different forms of the vernacular or even different languages. He argued against a 'common language' which would mean keeping the vernacular at a much lower level by depriving both Hindi and Urdu of much of their higher vocabulary. Moreover, he declared, when Muslims referred to the 'common language' they really meant Urdu and intended to abolish Hindi.⁶⁵ The Committee, however, felt that Varma's proposals meant too sharp a change in the declared policy of the government, and voted them down.

Dr Lal's scheme, more modest in scope, carried the day, though both the Muslim members and two of the six British members voted against it. Lal urged that the language and subject matter of upper primary readers should be generally the same, though in some cases alternative words for readers in either script should be indicated in brackets. In addition, the Hindi readers should include passages from recognized Hindi books or newspapers and the Urdu readers similar passages from Urdu sources.⁶⁶ In other words, the Committee accepted the principle that even on the primary level there should be some distinctive teaching in Urdu and Hindi, though avoiding too radical an application of this new approach.

The government proved more realistic than its committee this time, and eventually ordered the preparation of supplementary readers for upper primary classes, one set in Hindi and the other in Urdu, which came into use in 1916. Students who mastered the lower primary reader in the 'common language' qualified for promotion to the supplementary readers. The government, in effect, accepted Varma's proposal and the earlier resolution of the Rural Education Committee to introduce two distinctive sets of teaching materials at the primary level. As a justification for this decision, the government noted 'a growing tendency to diverge from simple Hindustani in which it has hitherto been sought to write all the primary readers', even in newspapers and in books for the ordinary reader, not to mention works of a more elevated or literary nature.⁶⁷

The government's decision amounted to an admission that the policy of a 'common language' had failed. Seventy years had passed since Fink's pious hope for a 'universal language' but the breach between Hindi and Urdu in the educational system had only widened. Pandits and *maulvīs* had certainly played an important part in this process of differentiation; their hold on the schools reminds one of the hold of Indian officials on the vernacular courts and offices. From a broader perspective, the increasing differentiation between the two forms of

Khari Boli in the schools reflected a much wider linguistic rivalry which in turn reflected a still wider communal rivalry between Hindus and Muslims.

The existence of two separate and completely unblendable scripts exacerbated this rivalry and provided unambiguous symbols for Urdu and Hindi supporters. Unlike the situation with vocabulary, no continuum of scripts existed along which one could choose something more towards the Urdu end or more towards the Nagari end: one chose either the Urdu or the Nagari script. One contemporary British observer wrote:

The very sight of the Nagri Character tends to perpetuate the antagonism between Urdu and Hindi, and to give an undue prominence to words of Sanskrit origin, on account of the long standing and almost resistless association existing between the Nagri character and the Sanskrit vocabulary.⁶⁸

The great numbers of schoolbooks (see Chapter II, page 41) which used this script and its associated Sanskrit vocabulary did much to lend weight to the claim that Hindi (in the sense of highly Sanskritized Khari Boli) actually existed. The irony lay in the fact that the British government, many of whose officials deplored the development of this form of Khari Boli, had created the educational system which did much to give Hindi life.

Although the Nagari script did do much to intensify the rivalry between Hindi and Urdu, the same process of Sanskritization would very likely have occurred even without the existence of Urdu. One of the most highly Sanskritized Indian languages of the nineteenth century was Bengali, whose literature had great influence on Hindi authors. Yet Bengali writers had no need to distinguish their language from a closely related but highly Persianized Bengali written in the Persian script because such a rival did not exist. Moreover, as we have seen (Chapter II) the earliest writers of Khari Boli Hindi saw no contradiction in also creating works in Islamic languages or scripts. In short, the Sanskritization of Khari Boli—or any other regional standard of the Hindi area which through historical accident might have provided the grammatical basis of a *lingua franca*—would have taken place in any case. The existence of Urdu simply intensified this process by presenting a rival from which to distinguish Hindi. The fact that Khari Boli became 'Hindi' stemmed from the historical and geographical situation in which Urdu—the *lingua franca* of north India when the Hindi movement began—arose. Had Braj Bhasha, for example, furnished the

grammatical basis for an Islamic-Hindu lingua franca, then undoubtedly Braj Bhasha Hindi, suitably Sanskritized, would have served the interests of Hindu nationalism just as well.⁶⁹ And as events in other areas such as Bengal and the Marathi-speaking part of Bombay Presidency made clear, Hindu nationalism did not need linguistic symbols to flourish, though it would certainly use them if they were at hand, as in the United Provinces.

Hindus and Muslims in Government Employment

Competition for government employment did much to generate communal feelings between educated Hindus and Muslims in the nineteenth century NWP&O. This economic rivalry underlay much of the linguistic antagonism between Urdu and Hindi supporters, since government service usually required certain language qualifications. While a tiny minority of educated Indians won prestigious positions through their knowledge of English, the bulk of aspirants to public service had to rely on their knowledge of one of the vernaculars. Hence the two closely related issues of the proper proportions of Muslims and Hindus in government service, and of the proper language and script for the official vernacular, affected many thousands of educated Indians throughout the province. From their ranks came the most active protagonists of Urdu and Hindi.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century the question of the appropriate ratio of Muslims and Hindus in government service assumed considerable importance in several provinces. In 1882 the National Muhammadan Association of Calcutta sent a memorial complaining of a great decline in the proportion of Muslims in government service, which stimulated the Government of India to order an inquiry into the position of Muslims in the public service throughout India. The results for the NWP&O made plain the fact that Muslims held appointments far out of proportion to their actual numbers in the population. Of the total of 54,130 Indian officials holding appointments under the provincial government, 35,302 (65.2 per cent) were Hindus and 18,828 (34.8 per cent) Muslims. The 1881 census showed 86.8 per cent of the provincial population were Hindus, and 13.3 per cent Muslims, with the percentage of literates for each community relatively close, 5.1 per cent and 4.4 per cent respectively. Thus based on their share of the literate population, about 11.8 per cent, Muslims held nearly three times their proportionate share of government positions.⁷⁰

Despite this advantageous position, educated Muslims felt that

equity demanded a still greater share of government service. The National Muhammadan Association had expressed dissatisfaction in its memorial that 'the Hindus outnumber the Muhammadans in the Government offices'.⁷¹ A writer in an 1885 issue of the *Khair Khwah-i-Islam* (an Urdu weekly of Allahabad) observed that the number of Hindu officers in Budaun district (western NWP&O) had exceeded the number of Muslim officers. As a result, the Hindu community had become more arrogant; to remedy the situation at least five of the ten highest judicial and executive posts should be held by Muslims.⁷² The Government of the NWP&O offered an explanation of these attitudes: under Muslim rule, Muslims had enjoyed a near monopoly of the highest and most lucrative offices, whereas the establishment of British rule inevitably diminished their share of the public service.⁷³

Educated Hindus, on the contrary, argued that their far greater numbers justified a much greater proportion of public service positions. Thus a writer in an 1882 issue of the *Hindi Pradip* (Allahabad) noted that while only a small number of Muslims held high appointments in Bengal, a much larger number held similar posts in the NWP&O. He claimed that Muslim subordinate judges, *munsifs* (minor judicial officials), Assistant Commissioners, and *tahsildars* (minor revenue officials) outnumbered their Hindu counterparts, and that Muslims dominated the Police Department. On the basis of population, he asserted, Hindus should outnumber Muslims seven to one.⁷⁴ Similarly, a writer in an 1887 issue of *Bharat Jivan* (a Hindi weekly of Banaras) pointed out that the civil list of the NWP&O showed 269 Hindus and 267 Muslims in the native civil service and in the subordinate judicial and executive services. According to the proportion of Muslims in the population, however, there should have been 480 Hindus and only 73 Muslims.⁷⁵

The results of the inquiry showed something else, suggested by Hindu complaints in the vernacular press, namely that Muslims held a much greater share of appointments in some departments of government than in others. They held more than half of the highest posts in the Judicial, Revenue and Police Departments, the most sought-after government positions. More Muslims than Hindus held some of the very highest posts: in Oudh only one Indian, a Muslim, had reached the rank of judge, and in the NWP two Muslims but no Hindus had attained the rank of Assistant District Superintendent of Police. In other departments, however, the proportion of Muslims fell sharply. In the Post Office, for example, their numbers did not even reach their proportional share.⁷⁶ In the Department of Public Instruction they filled only about a

quarter of the appointments, almost certainly a result of the greater importance of Hindi vis-a-vis Urdu in the primary and secondary schools of the province. No striking regional disparities appeared, with the exception of the hill districts. Here the population consisted almost entirely of Hindus and almost no one knew Urdu. Thus not a single Muslim appeared on the roster of government employees in the office of the Commissioner of Kumaun.⁷⁷

In other provinces of north India Muslims faced somewhat different situations. In the Punjab, for example, Muslims had nearly half of the highest administrative and judicial appointments, quite close to their proportion in the provincial population.⁷⁸ In the Central Provinces Muslims filled a little over a quarter of the nearly 20,000 government positions though they comprised only about 3.5 per cent of the population.⁷⁹ In Bengal, however, quite a different situation prevailed: here Muslims held a significantly lower proportion of positions than their proportion in the population.⁸⁰ The dominance of Muslims in the Punjab paralleled the dominance of Urdu in vernacular courts and offices. The less dominant but still important position of Muslims in the Central Provinces both reflected and influenced the slowness of the change to the Nagari script (see Chapter III). The position of Muslims in the NWP&O, less powerful than that of their coreligionists in the Punjab, more powerful than that of their fellow Muslims in the Central Provinces, and perceived as unjust by Hindu rivals for government service, ensured a lengthy struggle between Urdu and Hindi supporters.

The Relationship of Education and Employment

As we have seen, the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh generally favoured Urdu throughout the nineteenth century, and the domain of education proved no exception. Though both Hindi and Urdu received government support at the primary and secondary levels of vernacular education, when the question of government service arose, Urdu had more practical value since only Urdu was recognized as the official vernacular language. In 1877 the provincial government first prescribed the Middle Class Vernacular and the Middle Class Anglo-Vernacular Examinations⁸¹ as qualifications for government service, and explicitly recognized Urdu as the superior vernacular language.

The official order declared that from 1 January 1879, all appointments to public service with a monthly salary over Rs 10 would (with a few exceptions) require certain linguistic qualifications in addition to passing the prescribed examination. In offices using English, candidates needed

a Middle Class Anglo-Vernacular Examination certificate, with Urdu or Persian as the second language. In offices using the vernaculars candidates needed a Middle Class Vernacular Examination certificate, with either Urdu or Hindi credentials. In any office those having University Entrance Examination certificates with Urdu or Persian as a second language would have superior qualifications.⁸²

By the mid-1880s the sizeable increase in the numbers of candidates for these examinations showed that the order had begun to take effect. Each Collector or Deputy Commissioner (the chief officer of a district) received lists of successful candidates, and was supposed to fill vacancies from them. By the late 1880s the two Middle Class Examinations had come to be the educational events of greatest interest to the educated public. Towards the end of the century, however, their popularity began to wane in the face of increasing competition from the expanding numbers of School Final Examination and Entrance Examination pass candidates.⁸³

Success in either of the two Middle Class Examinations did not guarantee government service, however, as Babu Bharatendu Harishchandra of Banaras noted in his testimony to the Hunter Commission in 1882. After repeated complaints by educated Indians, Bharatendu said, the government had made these examinations necessary qualifications for public service. Unfortunately the new rule had become a dead letter for two chief reasons: first, the majority of British officials had strong prejudices against graduates and undergraduates; second, Indian court officials spared no efforts to prevent these new candidates from intruding into their offices, and their superiors generally accepted their recommendations for new positions. Only the Educational Department held out hope of employment to the educated.⁸⁴ These remarks found partial corroboration from John Nesfield of the Oudh Division of the Educational Department. He pointed out that although district officers usually encouraged those educated in government schools, Indian officials worked to prevent these graduates, whom they regarded as invaders, from securing appointments. According to Nesfield the majority of students reported to have secured government employment had done so in the Educational Department.⁸⁵

For a few years beginning in the mid-1880s the provincial government published statistics on the social and religious backgrounds of successful candidates for the two Middle Class Examinations which revealed patterns exactly parallel to those appearing previously in indigenous and government schools.⁸⁶ Tables 11 and 12 show that in the typical year

of 1887, Kayasths not only composed the largest single block of candidates, but also exceeded their proportionate share many times over. This caste group, generally recognized as the best Hindu scholars of Persian and Urdu, looked upon government service as a birthright.⁸⁷ Towards the end of the century, however, increasing numbers of complaints in the vernacular press from Kayasths suggested their growing concern that other castes were beginning to threaten this supposed birthright.⁸⁸ The Kayastha Conference, which held its first meeting in Lucknow in 1887, included the promotion of employment for Kayasths in commercial and industrial occupations (where opportunities were deemed superior to those in government and private service) as a major purpose of the new organization.⁸⁹ A typical lament appeared in an Urdu-language Kayasth newspaper of Agra. The writer deplored the unhappy situation of many of his caste-mates in the Central Provinces, unable to secure government employment despite university degrees. Kayasths had followed the profession of literary service for untold ages, he proclaimed, and had no aptitude for other kinds of employment. If the government would only make other classes

TABLE 11
Castes of Successful Candidates in the Anglo-Vernacular and
Vernacular Middle Examinations for 1887

Anglo-Vernacular			Vernacular		
Caste or Religion	Number	Percentage	Caste or Religion	Number	Percentage
Kayasth	376	32.7	Kayasth	417	25.2
Brahman	237	20.6	Brahman	373	22.5
Baniya	140	12.2	Baniya	176	10.6
Khatri	81	7.1	Khatri	10	0.6
Rajput	43	3.7	Rajput	147	8.9
Other	70	6.1	Other	122	7.4
Muslim	202	17.6	Muslim	413	24.9
TOTAL	1149	100.0	TOTAL	1658	100.1

Note: All figures have been compiled from the *NWP&O Education Report 1886-87*, 16-17, 19. All percentages have been calculated to the nearest 0.1 per cent. For *Anglo-Vernacular* 'Other' included: 15 Christians, 32 unspecified, and 23 divided among 10 Hindu castes, mostly lower, including Ahir, Kalwar, Sonar, etc. For *Vernacular* 'Other' included: 10 unspecified, and 112 divided among 25 Hindu castes, mainly lower, including Ahir, Lohar, Mali, Sonar, etc.

TABLE 12

Proportions of Students of Various Castes Passing the Anglo-Vernacular and Vernacular Middle Examinations for 1887 Compared to their Proportions in the Population in 1881

Caste or Religion	Population Proportion	Number Passed	Ideal Pass Numbers	Ratio of Representation
Khatri	(0.1)	91	(3.8)	(24.1)
Kayasth	1.0	793	37.8	21.0
Baniya	2.4	316	88.8	3.6
Rajput	5.9	190	222.0	0.9
Brahman	9.1	610	343.0	1.8
Muslim	11.5	615	434.0	1.4
Other	44.4	192	1677.0	0.1

Note: All figures have been compiled from the *NWP&O Education Report 1886-87*, 16-17, 19, and *Report on the Census of the N.-W. P. and Oudh, and of the Native States of Rampur and Native Garhwal, taken on the 17th February, 1881* (Allahabad: 1882), pp. 60, 136. The figures for the Khatri population did not appear in the 1881 census and were based on the *Census of the N.-W. Provinces, 1872*, Vol. I (Allahabad: 1873), pp. 77, 79. All figures have been rounded off to the first figure after the decimal point. *Population Proportion* was calculated by using the number of Kayasths as an arbitrary base equal to 1.00. Using percentages of the total population would have brought the same results, but the arbitrary base method was easier to calculate. *Ideal Pass Proportion* represents the numbers of students of each caste had their numbers been distributed according to their proportions in the population. *Ratio of Representation* indicates the degree to which each caste exceeded or fell short of its ideal pass proportion. Thus Kayasths appeared among successful candidates 21 times more often than their numbers in the population would theoretically justify, while Muslims appeared only 1.4 times more often than their numbers in the population.

return to their hereditary professions, leaving the public service free for Kayasths, they would not find themselves in their present miserable condition.⁹⁰

Kayasth complaints undoubtedly concerned not Muslims, who made up the second largest group of candidates, but other Hindus—chiefly Brahmans, Baniyas, Rajputs, and Khatri—whom comprised about half the total, nearly outnumbering Kayasths and Muslims combined. Khatri, like Kayasths, exceeded their proportionate share many times over. Brahmans and Baniyas were only slightly over-represented, while Rajputs were slightly under-represented. Not surprisingly, other castes with no tradition of education, were grossly under-represented. The chief

competitors of Kayasths and Muslims, then, came from the ranks of high-caste or middle-caste Hindus, the same groups who dominated the indigenous Hindi schools four decades earlier, and the same groups who were to control the leading Hindi organization of the nineteenth century, the Nagari Pracharini Sabha (Society for the Promotion of Nagari) of Banaras.⁹¹

Table 13 shows the effect of government language policy on the language choices of candidates for the Vernacular Middle Examination. Between 1874–75 and 1895–96 the proportions of candidates taking Hindi vis-a-vis Urdu reversed themselves. During the first few years Hindi candidates accounted for more than three-quarters of the total. Soon after the 1877 order, however, the balance began to shift and by 1886–87 Urdu candidates made up more than three-quarters of the whole, and this remained the case for the rest of the century.⁹² 'The reason, of course,' noted an education official in 1896, 'is that Urdu is the vernacular language of the law courts and Government offices, and that the examination is chiefly valued as a means of obtaining employment in connection with them.'⁹³

A comparison of the figures for 1886–87 in Table 11 with those for the Vernacular Middle Examination in Table 13 produces some interesting results.⁹⁴ Let us assume that all Muslims (413) and Kayasths (417) chose Urdu instead of Hindi. A few calculations will show that slightly over a quarter of the non-Kayasth Hindus (209 of 828) must have opted for Urdu too. If we assume that a very few Muslims and a few Kayasths chose Hindi, the fraction of non-Kayasth Hindus choosing Urdu might rise to a third.⁹⁵ We can make the comparison in a different way. Let us again assume that all Muslims decided in favour of Urdu. This means that Hindus split almost exactly down the middle, a little over one-half (626) for Urdu, a little under one-half (619) for Hindi. However one manipulates the figures, the results show that a significant number of educated Hindus, Kayasths and non-Kayasths alike, chose Urdu. While the equation Hindi = Hindu may have held true in this case, the equation Urdu = Muslim did not. This basic fact shows clearly that no matter how vociferous the champions of Hindi might wax, they could not claim that all Hindus shared their views. Hence the process of multi-symbol congruence of which the Hindi movement formed a major part did *not* include the majority even of educated Hindus in the nineteenth century NWP&O.

One might ask why any candidates at all chose Hindi for their Vernacular Middle Examination. To answer, let us imagine a fanciful

TABLE 13
Candidates Taking Hindi or Urdu in the Vernacular Middle Examinations
from 1874-75 to 1895-96

Year	Urdu		Hindi	
	Candidates	Percentage	Candidates	Percentage
1874-75	434	24.8	1315	75.2
1875-76	231	24.2	723	75.8
1876-77	199	24.5	614	75.5
1877-78	196	22.3	683	77.7
1878-79	154	87.0	23	13.0
1879-80	382	46.3	443	53.7
1880-81	596	49.2	615	50.8
1881-82	627	47.9	681	52.1
1882-83	715	49.9	717	50.1
1883-84	908	52.5	822	47.5
1884-85	1761 (535)	65.4 (57.5)	931 (396)	34.6 (42.5)
1885-86	2298 (732)	69.2 (58.7)	1025 (512)	30.8 (41.3)
1886-87	3382 (1039)	74.2 (62.7)	1175 (619)	25.8 (37.3)
1887-88	3179 (1234)	73.8 (69.7)	1127 (536)	26.2 (30.3)
1888-89	3435 (1616)	77.4 (71.4)	1005 (648)	22.6 (28.6)
1889-90	3625	79.8	920	20.2
1890-91	3290	79.1	869	20.9
1891-92	2727 (1121)	81.2 (76.1)	628 (351)	18.8 (23.9)
1892-93	2689 (1254)	78.8 (74.6)	724 (426)	21.2 (25.4)
1893-94	2967 (1428)	78.9 (77.9)	792 (406)	21.1 (22.1)
1894-95	2931 (1205)	78.3 (75.7)	814 (386)	21.7 (24.3)
1895-96	2814 (1247)	78.2 (72.5)	785 (474)	21.8 (27.5)

Note: All figures except the percentages have been taken from Malaviya, *Court Character*, p. 31. The figures in parentheses indicate successful candidates; no figures for these were given before 1884-85, or during the years 1889-90 and 1890-91. The three years underlined indicate: (1) the year in which the 1877 orders favouring Urdu first came into effect; (2) the year analysed in Tables 11 and 12 above; (3) the year in which the Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras was founded. All percentages have been calculated to the nearest 0.1%.

picture based on the preceding data. A large pair of gates labelled Vernacular Middle and Anglo-Vernacular Examinations stands before us. Through them pours a crowd of hundreds, moving in the direction of more distant gates. Many more hundreds fail to pass through even these first two gates. A small portion of the successful gate-passers

manages to enter two of the more distant gates, more splendid than the rest, designated as Subordinate Judicial and Executive Services, but many others are turned aside. Some of these, mainly Brahmans, Rajputs, Baniyas and Khattris, along with some Muslims, succeed in crossing the portals of a large plain gate entitled 'Educational Department'. Others, among them many Muslims, pass through an austere gate labelled 'Police Department'. While some of the crowd manage to enter still other smaller gates, many fail to enter through any gate at all, and straggle off into the surrounding countryside. This imaginary picture suggests that many non-Kayasth Hindus found their best hope for government service lay in the newer Educational Department rather than the older, more prestigious, and better-paid Revenue or Judicial Departments. From their ranks came many of the leaders of the Hindi movement. The three founders of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras included a Brahman, a Rajput and a Khatri; all three made their careers in education, two in government service, the third in both government and private service.⁹⁶

The Basic Contradictions in British Language Policy

In the nineteenth century NWP&O, more than elsewhere in north India, the pace of social mobilization outstripped that of assimilation and Hindus and Muslims became more and more subjectively conscious communities.⁹⁷ The government did much to shape relations between the two groups through fundamental contradictions in educational and administrative policies. Few set this forth more clearly than a writer in an 1883 issue of the *Bharat Bandhu* (a Hindi-English weekly of Aligarh). He noted with surprise and regret that on the one hand the government had made the use of Hindi common among the people by establishing Hindi schools in every village, while on the other, it had completely prohibited the use of Hindi in the courts.⁹⁸ He had hit the proverbial nail on the head: While the provincial government recognized Hindi and Urdu as separate subjects in the educational system, used textbooks printed in different scripts, and even required prospective teachers to become qualified in both language styles and scripts, the same government refused to grant Hindi and the Nagari script equal status with Urdu and the Persian (Urdu) script in courts and offices.

Government officials could always find reasons to justify the subordinate position of Hindi and Nagari. The language, they asserted, could match neither the literary development nor the technical and legal terminology of Urdu, while the script could equal neither the speed nor

the elegance of the Persian (Urdu) script. Their reasons, however, smacked of rationalization, for the same arguments apparently failed to apply to the Central Provinces or Bihar, where the government enforced policies favouring Hindi and Nagari or Kaithi. The same arguments also failed to apply to the hill districts of the NWP&O where Hindi and Nagari had long enjoyed official status. The government chose to favour Urdu and the Urdu script for political, not administrative or technical reasons, but preferred to explain this policy in non-political terms.

Government officials also conveniently ignored what might be called the 'self-fulfilling prophecy effect', namely, by favouring Urdu and the Urdu script, the government perpetuated some of the very shortcomings of Hindi and Nagari which purportedly rendered them unfit for official use. A flagrant example of this second contradiction in British language policy appears in a statement of Sir John Strachey, Lieutenant-Governor of the NWP&O, part of an official commentary on the Educational Department report for 1874:

While, therefore, Hindi may justly be called the mother tongue in the sense of the familiar language of the bulk of the common people, there can be no question that a speaker who would command the largest possible audience of intelligent natives of these Provinces would address himself to them in Urdu—the language chiefly used in literature, *in the business of Government*, and for the diffusion of public news. In these circumstances, it is a question of very little importance which of the two shall be called the mother tongue. *Government must take facts as it finds them*, and it is needless to say that *it will not attempt to alter the relative position of Urdu and Hindi, because those who speak Hindi are numerically the stronger body.*"

If Government had to take facts as it found them, then one of those facts was that Government itself had given the official status to Urdu which Strachey cited as a reason in favour of Urdu and against Hindi. Moreover, the superior value of Urdu for government service directed the efforts of many educated Hindus, especially Kayasths, away from the enrichment of Hindi literature and the development of the Hindi vernacular press, and thus further strengthened the case against Hindi.

Strachey rejected the argument that the government should favour Hindi because of the greater numbers of Hindi speakers. A quarter century later another Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Antony MacDonnell, put forth exactly the same argument to justify government recognition of Hindi and the Nagari script. Though the masses used local dialects or regional standards and only some among educated Hindus used Sanskritized Khari Boli Hindi, the increasing success of the Hindi movement

had much to do with the apparent volte-face of the government. The Hindi movement, or better, the Hindi-Nagari movement, represented increasing numbers of educated Hindus, many of whom looked to Hindi not only as a potential means to government service, but also as a vehicle of cultural and religious values.

The Hindi-Nagari movement of the nineteenth century NWP&O bore all the earmarks of the first stage of the process of transformation posited by Brass¹⁰⁰ in which ethnic groups become subjectively conscious communities. This stage requires four essential components: an elite, a socially mobilizing population, a symbol pool, and another group from whom the first can be differentiated. All of these appeared in the last third of the century, strengthened by the contradictions of British language policy. The British educational system fostered a Hindi-speaking elite, served as an agent of social mobilization, and provided a stimulus to the growth of Hindi literature and the use of the Nagari script. The British administrative system, by recognizing only Urdu and the Persian (Urdu) script for official purposes, supported a group—perceived chiefly as Muslims though including many Hindus—opposed to the interests of Hindi advocates. Though British policy aimed at linguistic assimilation, a common language, the fundamental contradictions in this policy worked to increase linguistic differentiation.

NOTES

1. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1873–74, Orders of Government, p. 15.
2. As previously mentioned, the Urdu script is a modified version of the Persian script, which in turn is a modified version of the Arabic script. The Persian script added several letters to the Arabic script, and the Urdu script added several to the Persian (the retroflex or cerebral sounds), though at the same time blurring some of the original distinctions of pronunciation represented by certain Arabic and Persian letters.
3. Benares (Banaras) Sanskrit College, the oldest institution of higher learning in the NWP&O, came into existence in 1792, less than 20 years after the British had annexed the easternmost part of the province.
4. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1846–47, p. 32.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. See Chapter I for a more detailed explanation of these terms.
9. *Ibid.* Curiously, Ballantyne has received little or no attention from Indian historians of Hindi. Even Ramchandra Shukla, author of a standard history of

Hindi literature and an important member of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha, mentions him only once and very briefly.

10. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1846-47, pp. 33, 38; *Ibid.*, 1852-53, pp. 68-9; *Ibid.*, 1853-54, pp. 61-2.
11. *NPS 7th Ann Rpt*, p. 61.
12. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1848-49, p. 15.
13. *Ibid.*, 1863-64, p. 6; *Ibid.*, 1866-67, p. 17.
14. According to one Banaras scholar, Hindi cannot be written well without a through knowledge of Sanskrit. Pandit Baldev Upadhyaya, Interview, 18 April 1972. See also: Christopher R. King, *The Nagari Pracharini Sabha (Society for the Promotion of the Nagari Script and Language) of Benares 1893-1914: A Study in the Social and Political History of the Hindi Language*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1974, pp. 194-7.
15. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1867-68, Appendix B, p. 33.
16. This organization, established on 10 May 1866, included Sir Syed Ahmed Khan among its leaders. Shan Muhammad, *Sir Syed Ahmed Khan: A Political Biography* (Meerut: 1969), pp. 208-9.
17. The signers included six Muslims and four Hindus. One of the Hindus was a Bengali, the other three probably Kayasths. 'Rajah Kykishen Doss Buhadur' signed as Secretary, and 'Issen Chunder Mookerjee' as Vice-President. Among the other signatures was that of 'Syud Ahmud'. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1867-68, Appendix B, pp. 22-4.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*, 1867-68, Appendix B, pp. 25, 26.
20. While a young officer in Central India and later in Banaras, McLeod found inspiration in the educational efforts of Lancelot Wilkinson and James Ballantyne to combine what they considered the best in traditional learning with Western knowledge. He also admired the successful efforts of James Thomason, Lieutenant-Governor of the NWP, to establish a widespread system of vernacular primary education beginning in the late 1840s. See Jeffrey Price Perrill, *Punjab Orientalism: The Anjuman-i-Punjab and Punjab University, 1865-1888*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Missouri, 1976, pp. 36-47.
21. Leitner, born in Hungary of Jewish ancestry, studied Arabic as a child in Turkey, earned higher degrees in Germany, became a naturalized British citizen, and eventually taught Arabic and Muslim law at London University. His scholarly and linguistic abilities, coupled with a singular capacity to work with Indian colleagues, made him the driving force of the Anjuman and of the Oriental College. *Ibid.*, pp. 85-107.
22. *Ibid.*, Chapters I, II and III *passim*.
23. Ironically, Aitchison had been an early member of the Anjuman. *Ibid.*, pp. 78-80, 128, 363-4.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 368-81, 442-7, 463-7, 536-70, 572-8, 593-4, 605-10.
25. *UP Educ Rpt*, 1923-24, p. 3; *Ibid.*, 1926-27, pp. 14.
26. *NWP&O SVN*, 1888, pp. 480-1.
27. S. K. Bhatnagar, *History of the M.A.O. College Aligarh* (Bombay, 1969), p. 60; Muhammad, *Sir Syed*, p. 66.

28. Shri Prakash, *Bharat-Ratna Dr. Bhagavan Das* (Meerut, 1970), p. 32; *NPS 6th Ann Rpt*, p. 21.
29. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1870–71, Appendix A, p. 46A.
30. A *tahsildār* (chief administrative officer of a subdivision of a district) of Farrukabad noted in his report on indigenous schools that a very large number of them had been established within six months of his investigation. He surmised that 'some misconception prevailed among the people with respect to the views of Government in enquiring into the state of education'. Another investigator, J. C. Wilson, Collector of Moradabad district, noted that many schoolmasters thought enquiries into their schools might injure their interests. The comments of other investigators showed that their statistics were often gathered through intermediaries of unknown reliability. Many investigators seem to have taken only a cursory interest in the subject, while a few—most notably Fink—compiled very thorough and detailed records. The ephemeral nature of many schools (many Hindi schools appeared and disappeared in accordance with the demands of the agricultural cycle) compounded the investigators' difficulties. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1845–46, Appendix I, pp. xliii–xliv, xlviii; *Ibid.*, 1846–47, xl.
31. *Ibid.*, 1844–45, pp. 9–10, Appendix I, pp. lxv–lxvii.
32. Fink reported that the level of achievement in these schools was low. Most of the students in those schools teaching Sanskrit along with Hindi could not tell whether sentences in a standard reader were Hindi or Sanskrit. *Ibid.*, 1844–45, pp. 9–10, Appendix I, pp. liii–liv, lxv–lxviii, lxxi, lxxiii, lxxiv; *Ibid.*, 1845–46, Appendix I, p. 1. This suggests that Fink's students may have faced the same puzzling situation as that of Dr Ballantyne's students, i.e., the virtual non-existence of a standardized and highly-Sanskritized Khari Boli Hindi.
33. Baniya refers to Hindu trading and merchant castes. Rajput refers to castes in the second great class of Hindu society, Kshatriyas or warriors, especially those tracing their ancestry to Rajasthan. Note that the number of teachers does not necessarily equal the number of schools. One-teacher schools, however, seem to have been by far the most common, judging from the usual close correspondence between the number of teachers and the number of schools in any particular district. *Ibid.*, 1844–45, pp. 9–10, Appendix I, pp. liii–liv, lxv–lxvii, lxxi, lxxiii, lxxiv; *Ibid.*, 1845–46, Appendix I, p. 1. See also Note 64, Chapter III.
34. *Ibid.*, 1844–45, Appendix I, lxiii.
35. Contemporary sources make clear how close the relationship between Persian and Urdu seemed to many. A writer in the 1 October 1870 issue of the Urdu newspaper *Najm-ul-Akhhār* (Meerut) saw no need to translate Persian books into Urdu since the two languages were so close to each other that a student of Urdu had little trouble understanding a Persian passage. *NWP SVN*, 1870, p. 385. J. C. Nesfield, an educational official in Oudh, in a report on indigenous schools wrote of similar attitudes:
 'The character of Urdu and Persian being the same, it is considered a waste of time to teach a child the Vernacular, which he will learn in any case, with or without the help of a teacher' (*Oudh Educ Rpt*, 1874–75, Appendix I, p. iv).
 'It is believed, too, (not without reason), that a knowledge of Persian is indispensable

to any one who wishes to understand the language used in the courts, or to take up any kind of literary employment, of which Urdu forms the basis. However circuitous, slow and indirect the process may be, it is invariably found that a student, who has completed the Persian course and has been under an energetic teacher can read and understand at sight any ordinary Urdu book, and write an Urdu letter with a fair degree of facility, correctness, and perspicuity, . . . ' (Ibid.)

36. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1844–45, pp. 9, 10, Appendix I, pp. lv, lix, lxii, lxiii, lxxiii.
37. See Chapter V for a description of the survey of Hindu and Muslim government servants' knowledge of Hindi and Urdu carried out by Lieutenant-Governor MacDonnell in 1900 which parallels this description of the indigenous schools.
38. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1844–45, p. 9, Appendix I, pp. lviii, lxv; Ibid., 1846–47, lv.
39. Ibid., 1845–46, Appendix I, p. xliii; Ibid., 1847–48, pp. lxxviii, c. An intriguing oddity appeared in the district report for Meerut: a Rajput reportedly teaching Arabic.
40. Ibid., 1850–51, pp. 6, 39, 59, 72; A. M. Monteath, 'Note on the State of Education in India during 1865–66', *SRGI, Home Dept*, No. LIV, p. 26.
41. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1850–51, p. 24; Monteath, 'Note on the State of Education', p. 25.
42. *Oudh Educ Rpt*, 1870–71, p. 95; Ibid., 1871–72, pp. 128–9; Ibid., 1872–73, p. 92; Perrill, *Punjab Orientalism*, pp. 44–7; Kerrin Dittmer, *Die Indischen Muslims und die Hindi-Urdu Kontroverse in den United Provinces* (Wiesbaden, 1972), p. 70. See also Note 64, Chapter III, on the contrast between the indigenous schools of Bihar and those of the NWP&O. Note that Thomason conceived of Hindi or Urdu as the languages of instruction.
43. These schools included: government colleges; government schools of higher class (secondary schools); government schools of lower class (primary schools) including Anglo-Vernacular, female schools, *tahsīlī* schools, and *halkabandī* schools; privage colleges open to government inspection; private schools of higher class open to government inspection; private schools of lower class open to government inspection; missionary schools; government normal schools; and the government engineering college at Roorkee. Since students often studied more than one language, and since the nature of the tabulation made it impossible to determine how many students were studying which additional languages, percentages have been calculated from the total number of students studying each language, making a total larger than the total number of students. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1859–60, Appendix A, pp. 1–62.
44. These schools included: government schools of higher class (superior *zīlā* schools); government schools of middle class (inferior *zīlā* schools); government schools of middle class (Anglo-Vernacular town schools and Vernacular town schools); government schools of lower class (village schools, government female schools, and government jail schools); private colleges, private schools of higher class, private schools of middle class, private schools of lower class, and private female schools, all open to government inspection; and government normal schools. *Oudh Educ Rpt*, 1868–69, Appendix A; Monteath, 'Note on the State of Education', p. 7.
45. By Hindu-heritage languages here I mean Sanskrit, Hindi, and Hindi taught in

Kaithi and other cursive forms of the Nagari script. By Islamic-heritage languages here I mean Arabic, Persian, and Urdu. These terms have been coined as useful expressions for referring to those languages of the NWP&O and elsewhere in north India written in the various versions of the Nagari script and associated with Hindus, and those written in the various versions of the Arabic script and associated with Muslims.

46. *NWP&O Educ Rpt*, 1880–81, p. 53; *Ibid.*, 1886–87, p. 41.
47. The figures for Tables 8 and 9 do not tally because Table 8 includes both schools directly managed by the government and schools inspected by the government, while Table 9 includes only the former. See Note 43 above.
48. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1873–74, Orders of Government, p. 16. It is important to note that in the NWP&O the Muslim population was proportionately more concentrated in the cities than the Hindu. Dittmer, *Die Indischen Muslims*, pp. 34–7.
49. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1844–45, Appendix I, lxii.
50. *Ibid.*, 1844–45, Appendix I, pp. lxxiii, lxxix.
51. Perrill, *Punjab Orientalism*, pp. 44–7; Dittmer, *Die Indischen Muslims*, p. 70; *Oudh Educ Rpt*, 1870–71, p. 95; *Ibid.*, 1871–72, pp. 128–9; *Ibid.*, 1872–73, p. 92.
52. Raghunandan Shastri, *Panjāb mē Hindī kī Pragati* (Vārāṇasī, 1943), pp. 52–3.
53. Shardadevi Vedalkar, *The Development of Hindi Prose Literature in the Early Nineteenth Century (1800–1856 A.D.)* (Allahabad, 1969), pp. 236–44.
54. *Oudh Educ Rpt*, 1875–76, p. 5. Emphasis mine.
55. Vedalkar, *Development of Hindi*, pp. 153–62, 236; *Educ Comm Report NWP&O*, p. 437.
56. *UP Educ Progs*, May 1903, p. 39; *UP SVN*, 1903, pp. 259–61.
57. *UP Educ Progs*, May 1903, p. 41, Letter dated 16 May 1903, from Government of the United Provinces to the Director of Public Instruction, United Provinces.
58. *Ibid.* In the same year, the provincial government instituted a scheme making it compulsory for all students in certain middle-level classes in its schools to study both Hindi and Urdu. Officials reasoned that students should learn to read both scripts in their own interest, though they did not have to study more than one branch of the vernacular. *NPS 10th Ann Rpt*, p. 24; *NPS 11th Ann Rpt*, p. 28; *NPS 11th Ann Rpt* (English), p. 11. This policy, strongly opposed by the Nagari Pracharini Sabha, was continued for many years: a Hindu official of the Sabha, Shri Shambhunath Bajpeyi, mentioned that in his youth (he was born in 1916) students were required to study both Hindi and Urdu in the sixth, seventh and eighth standards, while in earlier and later standards either Hindi or Urdu could be studied. Interview, Banaras, 3 April 1972.
59. *UP Educ Rpt*, 1911–12, pp. 106–7.
60. *Ibid.*, 1915–16, pp. 2, 102, 106–7; *Report of the Committee on Primary Education, United Provinces, 1913* (Allahabad, 1913), p. 65.
61. In 1902 the Northern Provinces and Oudh became the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh.
62. *Report of the Committee on Primary Education, United Provinces, 1913*, p. 67. Khan's assertion flew in the face of the facts. Post Office statistics for the mid-1870s (later discontinued) showed that even four decades previously Hindi

letters received for delivery numbered more than 80 per cent of Urdu letters. *NWP Gen Dept Progs*, August 1876, pp. 27–35. See Table 5, Chapter II for more details.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
64. Varma joined the NPS as an honorary member in 1894, and Lal, a wealthy life member of the NPS, had donated the first large sum (Rs 1000) for the creation of a Hindi dictionary. *Ibid.*, pp. 1–2, 19–20; Shyam Sundar Das, *Merī Ātmakahānī* [*The Story of My Life*] (Prayāg, 1957), p. 148; *Kāśī-Nāgarīpracārīnī Sabhā kā Vinīt Nivedan* [*A Modest Submission of the Kashi Nagari Pracharini Sabha*] (Kāśī, 1923), p. 19; *NPS 11th Ann Rpt*, Membership List, No. 484; *NPS 21st Ann Rpt*, Membership List, No. 156.
65. *Report of the Committee on Primary Education, United Provinces, 1913*, pp. 20–3, 63.
66. *Ibid.*
67. *Ibid.*, pp. 60–1; *UP SVN*, 1914, p. 1386.
68. J. C. Nesfield, Director of Public Instruction in Oudh in the mid-1870s, quoted in Nandalal Chatterji, 'The Government's Attitude to Hindi-Urdu Hindusthani in the Post-Mutiny Period', *Journal of the Uttar Pradesh Historical Society*, New Series, III (1955), p. 30.
69. See Christopher R. King, 'Forging a New Linguistic Identity: The Hindi Movement in Banaras, 1868–1914', in Sandria B. Freitag, editor, *Culture and Power in Banaras: Community, Performance, and Environment, 1800–1980* (Berkeley, 1989), pp. 189–92.
70. 'Correspondence on the Subject of the Education of the Muhammadan Community in British India and Their Employment in the Public Service Generally', *SRGI, Home Department*, No. CCV, Home Department Serial No. 2 (Calcutta, 1886), pp. 240, 286.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 240.
72. *NWP&O SVN*, 1885, pp. 77–8.
73. 'Correspondence on the Subject of the Education', pp. 240, 285. Sir Antony MacDonnell, Lieutenant-Governor of the NWP&O around the turn of the century, wrote concerning his policy of achieving a balance between Hindus and Muslims in government service: 'I have in ordinary circumstances endeavoured to adjust my appointments with reference to the relative numbers and influence of the two great religions. Other things being equal, I have endeavoured to appoint three Muhammadans for every five Hindus. These proportions are, of course, far more favourable to the Muhammadans than would emerge from a mere consideration of the census proportions of the two classes; but having regard to the traditional position which Muhammadans have held in the Government of the country, and to their better education than Hindus (except the Kayasth class, of whom one can easily have too much), the proportions seem to me to be fair.' A. P. MacDonnell, 'Note on U.P. 1901', MacDonnell Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford, MSS. Eng. Hist. (355), p. 37.
74. *NWP&O SVN*, 1882, p. 673.
75. *Ibid.*, 1887, p. 267. The writer's arithmetic was either faulty, or incorrectly recorded, for the first pair of numbers adds up to 536, the second to 553.

76. The relatively low proportion of Muslims in the Post Office may be partly explained by the substantial number of Hindi letters sent through the mail, and the very small number of educated Muslims familiar with Hindi and Nagari. See Table 5, Chapter II.
77. 'Correspondence on the Subject of the Education', pp. 287-9, 290.
78. *Ibid.*, pp. 292-3.
79. *Ibid.*, p. 319.
80. The Hindu-Muslim disparity in government employment in Bengal was of long standing: in 1868 Hindus held 345 of the highest posts, Muslims 93, a ratio of almost four to one, although the population ratio was only two to one. *Pioneer* (Allahabad), 1 June 1868, pp. 2-3, citing *Englishman* (Calcutta).
81. The government educational system at this time included two great divisions: the Anglo-Vernacular, in which the medium of instruction was the vernacular (Hindi or Urdu) and English was taught as a separate subject; and the Vernacular, in which the medium of instruction was the vernacular and English was not taught. These divisions remained in place up to Independence, though language policy occasionally shifted. In 1891, for example, English for a while became the medium of instruction for all subjects in the Anglo-Vernacular curriculum. The middle class examination in each case came about halfway through the secondary level. *NWP&O Educ Rpt*, 1890-91, p. 163; *Ibid.*, 1891-92, p. 20, Orders of Government, p. 7.
82. 'Correspondence on the Subject of Education', pp. 290-1.
83. *NWP&O Educ Rpt*, 1880-81, p. 62; *Ibid.*, 1885-86, Orders of Government, p. 6; *Ibid.*, 1886-87, p. 15; *Ibid.*, 1887-88, Orders of Government, p. 4; *Ibid.*, 1899-1900, p. 31. The School Final Examination marked the end of secondary education for those not planning to continue further. The Entrance Examination, on the other hand, marked both the end of secondary education and the beginning of higher education for those planning to continue further; admission into higher education required it. *Ibid.*, 1902-1903, pp. 6-7.
84. *Educ Comm Rpt NWP&O*, p. 205.
85. *NWP&O Educ Rpt*, 1880-81, p. 62.
86. Statistics on the social and occupational backgrounds of candidates in the Anglo-Vernacular Examination first appeared in the annual education reports of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh in 1884-85 and continued until 1892-93. Those for the Vernacular Examination candidates appeared between 1886-87 and 1891-92. It would be interesting to know the social and religious backgrounds of the unsuccessful candidates, usually two or three times the numbers of successful candidates, but this information does not appear in the reports.
87. *Educ Comm Rpt NWP&O*, pp. 229-30.
88. *NWP&O SVN*, 1896, p. 435; *Ibid.*, 1898, pp. 63-64, 406, 415; *Ibid.*, 1900, p. 313.
89. Charles H. Heimsath, *Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform* (Princeton, 1964), p. 282.
90. *NWP&O SVN*, 1899, pp. 8-9.
91. *NWP&O Educ Rpt*, 1892-93, pp. 50-1. The English Middle Examination—the

direct continuation of the Anglo-Vernacular Middle Examination—of 1895, showed similar caste proportions among its successful candidates: Kayasths numbered 403 or 31.0%, Brahmans 300 or 23.1%, Muslims 251 or 19.3%, Baniyas 134 or 10.3%, Kshatriyas (Rajputs) 61 or 4.7%, Khatris 47 or 3.7%, Christians 21 or 1.6%, and Others 81 or 6.3%. Ibid., 1894–95, p. 38. See also King, *The Nagari Pracharini Sabha*, Chapter IX.

92. *NWP&O Educ Rpt*, 1895–96, p. 37; Ibid., 1896–97, p. 53; Ibid., 1897–98, p. 40; Ibid., 1898–99, p. 36.
93. Ibid., 1895–96, p. 37.
94. Unfortunately, the government's statistics do not show the numbers of those from each caste or religious group choosing Urdu or Hindi.
95. This speculation is suggested by the figures for Muslim and Kayasth students in indigenous Hindi schools. See the section of this chapter entitled 'Indigenous Schools in the North-Western Provinces'.
96. See King, *The Nagari Pracharini Sabha*, pp. 247–51.
97. See the section of Chapter I entitled 'Theoretical Background' for the meaning of these terms.
98. *NWP&O SVN*, 1883, p. 764.
99. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1873–74, p. 16, Orders of Government, No. 667A of 1874, Naini Tal, 4 November 1874. Emphasis mine.
100. See the section of Chapter I entitled 'Theoretical Background' for a summary of Brass's theory.

CHAPTER V

The Hindi-Nagari Movement

Hindi's condition at this time was very bad. It was remarkable that it was still living. . . . To even mention the name of Hindi was considered sinful. There was absolutely no respect for it in the courts. In schools it had a place only up to middle class. The majority of students took Urdu. A student who could speak English fluently was considered excellent and capable and held in esteem. Hindi speakers were regarded as stupid yokels.¹

Introduction and Overview

The Hindi-Nagari movement in the sense of organized groups seeking change through political action began in the late 1860s and continued with varying intensity well into the twentieth century. The supporters of Hindi and the Nagari script did not achieve final success until shortly after independence in 1947, when the Government of Uttar Pradesh adopted Hindi written in the Devanagari script as the official state language.² During the nineteenth century the movement remained largely on a provincial level, and mostly in the NWP&O, but in the next century the issue of the proper language and script advanced to a national level and did much to exacerbate Hindu-Muslim relations.

In the NWP&O one of the most important milestones in this lengthy controversy occurred in 1900, when the provincial government issued a resolution granting the Nagari script equal status with the Urdu in certain important areas of official business.³ Though scholars discussing the language politics of this period usually cite the 1900 resolution as the culmination of the Hindi-Nagari movement, a careful investigation reveals that Hindi-Nagari adherents had won a largely symbolic victory which brought little real change in the dominance of Urdu in the official sphere.⁴

The Hindi-Nagari movement in the NWP&O flared up and died down several times before the twentieth century, with periods of intense activity followed by periods of nearly total inactivity. Part of the explanation for this lies in the lack of a stable organizational base before the founding of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha (Society for the Promotion of Nagari) of Banaras in 1893. Prior to this date, no major organization

had had the promotion of Hindi and Nagari as a chief goal, with the result that sustained efforts proved impossible. The Sabha provided a body of men emotionally and intellectually devoted to the growth of their chosen language and script, and effectively channelled resources for a wide variety of political and cultural purposes. The Nagari Pracharini Sabha (NPS) not only spearheaded the agitation which led to the resolution of 1900 but also conducted a search for old Hindi manuscripts, founded a library, published numerous Hindi works including school texts, awarded prizes for good Nagari handwriting and good Hindi literature, and published a scholarly journal in Hindi.⁷ The NPS also had much to do with the founding of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan (Society for Hindi Literature) of Allahabad in 1910, which soon became the premier organization for the promotion of Hindi and Nagari on the national level.

The leaders and members of the Sabha represented a Hindi-speaking elite which attempted to promote certain views of the proper nature of Hindi, Hindi literature, and the Nagari script. For example, the NPS constructed a major myth about the antiquity of 'Hindi' by using the term to include older writings in other literary dialects, particularly Braj Bhasha, but to exclude modern writings in these same dialects. Also, many of the Sabha's activities aimed at attaching value to Hindi, Nagari, and a literature which glorified a Hindu past, thus implicitly expressing a Hindu communalism and supporting the equation Hindi = Hindu.

This emphasis on a Hindu past was reflected in the social origins of the Sabha's earliest membership, which bore a striking resemblance to that of students enrolled in Hindi schools fifty years earlier and to that of Hindu candidates (excluding Kayasths) for the Anglo-Vernacular and Vernacular Middle Examinations a decade previously. The composition of the Sabha's membership remained essentially unchanged for many decades. Despite several efforts, the organization failed to enlist any significant support from the Kayasth community, and never succeeded in attracting more than minuscule numbers of Muslims. The equation Urdu = Muslim + Hindu remained unchanged, though not unchallenged, by the Sabha.

The supporters of Urdu, chiefly Muslims and Kayasths, enjoying all the benefits of government patronage and never finding themselves on the defensive before the resolution of 1900, felt no need to establish a permanent organization devoted exclusively to the promotion of Urdu. The picture changed after 1900, however, when numbers of short-lived Urdu Defence Associations sprang up, followed by the creation of the

Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu (Society for the Progress of Urdu) in 1903, which became the major Urdu organization on the national level.

Though the practical effects of the 1900 resolution hardly injured Muslim interests, the psychological impact proved substantial. After 1900 Muslims in the NWP&O could no longer take for granted government support for one of their most cherished cultural symbols. The resolution did little to aid the interests of Hindi partisans but much to embitter Hindu-Muslim relations. In the end, all attempts at compromise between Hindi and Urdu adherents, whether by government or by national leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, came to nothing. The partition of British India into India and Pakistan found an echo in the partition of Khari Boli into Hindi and Urdu.

The Hindi-Urdu Controversy of the 1860s and 1870s

To attempt to establish the exact date on which the Hindi-Urdu controversy began in the NWP&O would prove neither practical nor profitable. Nevertheless, contemporary evidence indicates a terminus a quo in the early 1860s. About this time debating clubs, societies, institutes, and other similar organizations whose members included Europeans and educated Indians sprouted like mushrooms in cities all over north India. Since their aims often included the discussion of contemporary ideas and problems, the issue of the proper language and script inevitably arose. Thus, in 1864 some members of the Benares Institute (founded in 1861) raised the question of whether the vernacular of the North-Western Provinces (NWP) was Hindi or Urdu; the membership opted for Hindi.⁶ In 1866 a contemporary observer, the French scholar of languages Garcin de Tassy, reported that a great dispute had arisen between Hindus and Muslims over the respective merits of Hindi and Urdu, and mentioned the pro-Hindi views of Navin Chandra Ray of the Anjuman-i-Punjab (Society of the Punjab).⁷

In 1867 the British Indian Association of the North-Western Provinces, among whose prominent members was Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, put forth a proposal for a Vernacular University and met with strenuous opposition from the Anjuman-i-Punjab which had advanced the idea of an Orientalist University. The former urged the exclusive use of Urdu as the medium of instruction, while the latter called this approach 'one-sided'.⁸ In 1868 a Bengali member of the Allahabad Institute raised the question of the proper vernacular for the NWP and advocated Urdu written in the Devanagari script.⁹

The vernacular press provided another forum for the discussion of language and script. For example, the Allahabad Institute meeting

touched off a debate in the *Aligarh Institute Gazette* between Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, one of the leading Muslims of the NWP, and Saroda Prasad Sandel, a member of the Allahabad Institute. Sandel asked Khan whether Hindi, which he called the mixed language of north India, in the Devanagari script should become the official language of the NWP.¹⁰ Khan replied that he called this mixed language Urdu, though he would not oppose the recognition of the Nagari script. Sandel then asserted that Hindi and Urdu were not the same, and that Urdu should make room for the more popular Hindi, just as Persian had made room for Bengali and Urdu.¹¹ In a subsequent exchange of views Khan argued against any proposal to discontinue Urdu and revive 'the old dead *Bhasha*'.¹²

This series of interchanges represented in miniature much of the debate that continued up to independence and beyond. Urdu's champions emphasized assimilation by maintaining that their language originated in India and represented a joint Hindu-Muslim product, and that Hindi stood for an attempt to resuscitate a defunct tradition. Hindi's advocates, on the other hand, emphasized differentiation by arguing that Urdu contained many foreign elements, and that Hindi would promote the welfare of the (largely Hindu) masses.

The Hindi-Urdu controversy continued to occupy the vernacular press intermittently during the rest of the century. During 1869 the issue occupied more space in the Hindi and Urdu newspapers of the NWP than any other single subject. Thereafter the matter died down, but surged up again in 1873, the year in which supporters of Hindi and Nagari presented a memorial to the provincial Lieutenant-Governor. The early 1880s and the late 1890s saw even greater bursts of activity, though in the intervening years the torrents of contention shrank to mere trickles of disputation.

Throughout the entire controversy many of the same arguments, some of them in existence since the original decision to replace Persian in 1837, appeared again and again. Those in favour of Hindi repeatedly attacked the Urdu script as illegible and ambiguous,¹³ and the Urdu language as foreign. Those in favour of Urdu derided the Nagari script as slow and clumsy, and Hindi as unstandardized and poor in technical and scientific vocabulary. The strongest argument which Hindi partisans could muster reappeared ad nauseam: the good of the Hindu majority required the introduction of Hindi even if the Muslim minority should suffer from the change.¹⁴

The Hindi-Urdu controversy found yet another outlet, the public arena of petitions, memorials and memorandums to the government. In

1868 Babu Shiva Prasad, a prominent official of the provincial Department of Public Instruction, wrote a memorandum on the question of the official language in favour of Hindi.¹⁵ The provincial government received other memorandums and memorials in 1869, 1872 and 1873.¹⁶ Two of these four, those of 1868 and 1873, deserve more detailed discussion, for they contain statements of an elite which has already passed through the first stage of becoming a subjectively conscious community and entered the next stage of becoming a nationality through articulating political rights. For their authors, language and script have become symbols of religious and cultural identity, and they reveal the process of multi-symbol congruence in their implicit assumption that Hindi = Hindu.

Prasad's work, *Memorandum: Court Characters, in the Upper Provinces of India*, though bearing the words 'For Private Circulation' on the title page, clearly aimed at influencing the government. The author presented a full-blown myth of the antiquity and ubiquity of Hindi:

When the Muhammadans took possession of India, they found Hindi the language of the country, and the same character the medium through which all business was carried on.¹⁷

By 'the country' he meant the great plains of northern India including Bihar, the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, Rajputana, the Punjab, and parts of the Central Provinces; by 'Hindi' the different dialects spoken throughout this area; and by 'the Hindi character' Devanagari and all its various cursive forms including Kaithi. Among these dialects, Prasad continued, those originating from Mathura, Kanauj and Delhi (i.e., Braj Bhasha and Khari Boli) had formed the basis of this grand universal speech of most of north India.

The new Muslim rulers, however, wrote Prasad, did not trouble themselves to learn Indian languages, but rather forced Hindus to learn Persian. Whoever aspired to wealth and power had to learn Persian, but outside the cities and Muslim courts the masses of people had still carried on their business in Hindi. Moreover, he added scornfully in an obvious reference to the Kayasths, those Hindus 'who did not aspire or seek to gain the favour of the Muhammadans by becoming, if not altogether, half Muhammadanized, still valued Hindi works'.¹⁸ Persian words, finding their way into the dialects that made up Hindi, had brought about a new mixture of languages known as Urdu or 'semi-Persian'.¹⁹

Prasad reserved some of his harshest words for the British, whose language policy he blamed for forcing a foreign language, Urdu in the Persian script, on the masses:

The Persian [in this context, including Urdu or 'semi-Persian'] of our day is half Arabic; and I cannot see the wisdom of the policy which thrusts a Semitic element into the bosoms of Hindus and alienates them from their Aryan speech [i.e., Hindi]; not only speech, but all that is Aryan; because through speech ideas are formed, and through ideas the manners and customs. *To read Persian is to become Persianized, all our ideas become corrupt and our nationality is lost. Cursed be the day which saw the Muhammadans cross the Indus; all the evils which we find amongst us we are indebted for to our 'beloved brethren' the Muhammadans. . . . I again say I do not see the wisdom of the policy which is now trying to turn all the Hindus into semi-Muhammadans and destroy our Hindu nationality.*²⁰

In addition, went on Prasad, by supporting Urdu in the NWP, Oudh and the Punjab, the government was cutting off the vernacular literature of this area from other branches of the Aryan language family such as Bengali, Marathi and Gujarati. Scientific and technical terms for all these Aryan languages could easily be coined from the same Sanskrit roots, while similar terms for Urdu had to be formed with greater difficulty from Arabic.²¹

Prasad concluded his memorandum with a plea that the government should drive the Persian script from the courts as it had previously expelled the Persian language, and bring in Hindi. Numerous advantages would result: the masses would understand court proceedings, only one vernacular would exist, the time required for an education would lessen, vernacular literature would rapidly expand, and most important, 'Hindu Nationality' would be restored.²²

The memorial of 1873, presented by Hindi supporters to the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir William Muir, opened by asking for 'the restoration of Hindi or Nagari characters' in all courts and offices using the Persian script. The authors reiterated many of the arguments against Urdu and the Urdu script already published in the vernacular press: the Persian (Urdu)²³ script made court documents illegible, encouraged forgery, facilitated the use of incomprehensible Arabic and Persian words, and had a foreign origin; the bulk of the population used Hindi and only a part of the higher classes—who themselves formed only a small part of the population—had become used to Persian; Muslims, who probably would not like the change, made up only one-eighth of the population, and even many of them lived in villages and used Hindi for their ordinary business; courts in Rajputana, Central India, Nepal, and in the hill districts of the NWP used Hindi without experiencing any difficulty.²⁴

In short, government should favour the interests of the majority.

Among the benefits, emphasized the memorialists, would be the great impetus which the education of the masses would receive from the introduction of the new script. Such a change would combine the already existing 'national sympathy' for the Hindi script with greatly increased prospects for the public service, and thereby lead to 'the rapid and general spread of knowledge among the people'.²⁵

The concern of the memorialists for the education of the masses smacked of self-interest, for the vast majority of the population could never hope to receive employment in the public service whatever the official language or script. Behind this invocation of benefits to the masses, most likely lay the potential rewards for those Hindus who did not share the Kayasth and Muslim near-monopoly of government service. A change of the official language would have greatly benefited those Hindu aspirants to government employment—notably Brahmans, Rajputs, and Baniyas—educated in the Hindi-Sanskrit rather than the Urdu-Persian tradition.

Like others before and after them, the memorialists several times confused the names for language and script; 'Hindi', 'Hindi character', and 'Nagari character', all seemed interchangeable to them, as did 'Persian' and 'Persian character'. So persistent was this tendency among language partisans that Sir George Grierson, author of the massive *Linguistic Survey of India* remarked:

Amongst fanatics who ought to know better, but do not wish to do so, this question of characters has unfortunately become a sort of religious shibboleth . . . these fanatics have confused alphabet with language. They say, *because* a thing is written in Devanagari *therefore* it is Hindi, the language of Hindus, and *because* a thing is written in the Persian character *therefore* it is Urdu, the language of Musalmans.²⁶

The radical differences between the two scripts provided the most salient feature for those who wished to differentiate Hindi and Urdu. Writers could and did use a mixed language incorporating Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit words, but no writer could use a mixed script including elements of the Persian and the Devanagari. This irreducible difference contributed much to the process of multi-symbol congruence by which language, script and religion fused into one common identity for increasing numbers of Hindus.

Despite their efforts, the memorialists failed to bring about any change in government language policy. Muir, known for his fondness for Urdu and Persian, retired without passing any definite orders on the subject. His successor, Sir John Strachey, regarded Hindi as an inferior

language, and *his* successor, Sir George Couper issued the order of 1877 (see Chapter IV) giving preference to candidates for government service taking Urdu in qualifying examinations.²⁷ Moreover, near the end of 1873, a number of Muslims formed a temporary league to prevent any concessions on the issue of the court language, and this too may have prevented serious consideration of the memorial. More important, the document's authors could speak only for a small fraction of all Hindus, and only a part of educated Hindus. They represented an elite which had become a self-conscious community trying to expand that community and to forge a nationality.

The Hindi-Nagari Campaign of 1882

During the latter half of the 1870s the Hindi-Nagari movement languished on the political front, and only occasional items in the vernacular press betrayed the fact that the Hindi-Urdu controversy still smouldered in the hearts of some. In the early 1880s, however, Hindi-Nagari partisans in the NWP&O regained hope, for in 1880 the Government of Bengal had issued a resolution ordering the Nagari (or Kaithi) script to be used exclusively in large parts of Bihar.²⁸ In 1882 they became enthusiastic when the Government of India appointed a commission under the chairmanship of Sir William Hunter to review the progress of education in India. Many believed that this body had the power to bring about a change in the language policy of provincial governments, and the Hunter Commission soon found itself the focus of an extensive campaign in the NWP&O and to a lesser extent in the Punjab and elsewhere. Several NWP&O organizations collected over 67,000 signatures in favour of Hindi and Nagari and sent them to the Commission along with more than a hundred memorials. Twenty-eight witnesses from the province either appeared before the Commission or sent written testimony, among them Babu (now Raja) Shiva Prasad, Babu Harishchandra (Bharatendu), and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan.²⁹

These developments aroused great expectations in the vernacular press and elsewhere. For example, the Hindi *Prayag Samachar* (Allahabad) reported that the agitation attending the visit of the Commission had produced a widespread impression that Hindi would shortly take the place of Urdu as the court language of the province.³⁰ During much of 1883 the vernacular press dealt frequently with the matter, but when the Commission declined to deal with the controversy in its report issued later in the same year, coverage once again shrank to almost nothing.³¹

Urdu partisans made minimal efforts in the NWP, submitting only a single memorial, which nevertheless gave a clear picture of how its Muslim authors interpreted the motives of their opponents.³² To them, Hindu religious feeling lay at the bottom of all the agitation for Hindi and Nagari. Those who wanted to change the court language and script to Hindi and Nagari had no concern with the public interest, but rather had simply expressed their religious bigotry. By extending the use of Hindi and Nagari they thought they were 'giving currency to one of their religious points'.³³ Moreover, the advocates of Hindi showed an astonishing inconsistency, claiming that Nagari and Hindi were the 'common character and language of the country' but using Urdu in their domestic and social lives, indeed even in the meetings they held to promote their chosen language.

These views had some justification, since several memorials plainly showed the connection between Hindi and Hinduism in the minds of their authors. The memorial submitted by the Satya Dharmavolambini Sabha (Society for Supporting the True Religion) of Aligarh asserted that 'for the people at large the study of Hindi is not necessary only because it is their vernacular, but also because it is the only language, except of course Sanskrit, through the medium of which they can be instructed in their social and religious duties'.³⁴ A memorial from the Meerut Association declared that 'the Muhammadans have no religious prejudices against learning the characters of the Hindus, but the Hindus are bound not to utter a single word of Persian or Arabic in their divine devotion'.³⁵ A memorial from the Hardoi Union Club presented a view of an impure Urdu and a pure Hindi which appeared again and again in the course of the movement: Hindi exercised a beneficial and positive moral influence on people, while Urdu enticed them to lead dissolute and immoral lives. To introduce Hindi for official and educational purposes would lead the public to read religious books and avoid 'the immoral effects of so many Urdu love stories'.³⁶

Whatever the true motives of Hindi partisans, no previous campaign had mobilized them in the tens of thousands, which suggests that the more and more Hindus had begun to accept the twin equations of Hindi = Hindu and Urdu = Muslim. Several witnesses appearing before the Hunter Commission spoke to this point. Babu Bireshwar Mitra, a pleader in the High Court of the NWP averred that the people regarded the recognition of Urdu as the court language 'as a pure and simple survival of the old Moslem tyranny in India'.³⁷ Professor Raj Kumar Sarvadhikari, speaking of Oudh, put the matter more baldly:

'Urdu is the dialect of the Muhammadan inhabitants and Hindi of the Hindus.'³⁸

Despite enjoying greater support than previous campaigns,³⁹ the 1882 campaign failed for essentially the same reasons as earlier efforts, namely, Muslim opposition, British patronage of Urdu and disregard for Hindi, and Hindu apathy. This setback, however, did not discourage the stauncher supporters of Hindi. As the editor of the Banaras Hindi weekly *Bharat Jivan* wrote in grandiloquent style: 'Shall we cut out our tongues and cast them away and not speak the truth? No. No. If the government does not listen we must cry out so loudly that the sound reaches its ear.'⁴⁰ The Hindi-Nagari movement continued though a campaign had been lost, because the forces which generated it continued to grow stronger.

The Hindi-Nagari Movement in Vernacular Literature

The Hindi-Nagari movement took yet another form, namely, Hindi literature, particularly drama and poetry. These literary genres presented familiar arguments with more depth and passion, and also developed other themes more suited to literature than to memorials, newspaper editorials, and learned discussions. Contemporary evidence suggests that such literature had some impact: people saw some of the dramas and read the poems, one of which stirred up considerable local controversy.⁴¹ A brief glance at four such works reveals several aspects of the Hindi-Nagari movement from a different perspective.

In 1889 the *Devanagari Gazette* (Meerut) reported that Hindi advocates had taken advantage of a recent *melā* (local religious fair) to make speeches in favour of Hindi and to perform four dramas. The *Gazette* edified its readers by printing the first and last scenes of one of these dramas, entitled *Kishtī Kasbī Nāṭak* [*The Drama of the Boat and the Prostitute*]. In this drama, the first of our four works, a District Superintendent of Police sends an order in Urdu to one of his Sub-Inspectors to keep a boat (*kishtī*) ready for his coming. The sub-Inspector, misreading the order because of the ambiguity of the Persian script, arranges instead for a prostitute (*kasbī*). When his superior arrives he produces the prostitute, arousing the fury of the Superintendent and the jealousy of his wife. In the end the Superintendent's head clerk removes the wife's suspicions and her husband's wrath by explaining how the nature of the Persian script brought about the unfortunate misunderstanding.⁴²

The author of this play may well have been Pandit Gauri Datta, a

Saraswat Brahman who founded the Devanagari Pracharini Sabha (Society for the Promotion of Devanagari) sometime before 1882, published the *Devanagari Gazette* for several years, sent a memorial to the Government in favour of Hindi in 1894, and established or inspired the founding of several Nagari schools. He also wrote a number of works in Hindi including several school books, a dictionary, and a play entitled *Nāgarī aur Urdū kā Svāṅg* [*The Melodrama of Nagari and Urdu*], the second of our four works.⁴³ He earned his living as a teacher until the age of forty, when he gave up his career, made over all his property to the cause of Nagari, and became a *sanyāsī* (a homeless wanderer who has renounced the world), devoting the rest of his life to a crusade for his chosen script. Whenever a fair or festival took place in the area around Meerut he was likely to be found with a crowd of boys around him speaking on the virtues of Nagari. While other Hindus used greetings like '*jāy Rām*' [victory to Rama], he used the salutation '*jāy nāgarī kī*' [victory to Nagari].⁴⁴

Babu Ratna Chandra, the author of the third work, practised law in the High Court at Allahabad. His drama, *Hindī Urdū kā Nāṭak* [*A Play of Hindi and Urdu*], used a British court as the setting of a confrontation between the two rivals.⁴⁵ Sohan Prasad, the author of the fourth work, a poem of about 400 stanzas in Avadhi with a sprinkling of Khari Boli Hindi, taught school in Gorakhpur district (northeastern NWP). His poem, *Hindī aur Urdū kī Laṛāī* [*A Quarrel between Hindi and Urdu*], caused a furore on its first appearance in 1885. Local Muslims, protesting that the poem contained strictures against Islam and one of the caliphs, appealed to the government to have the work banned and all copies burned, and started legal proceedings against the author. Various Hindu organizations raised funds to support Prasad, and eventually the opposing parties reached an out-of-court settlement under which Prasad promised to withdraw the most offensive stanzas from future editions.⁴⁶

The latter three works share a number of characteristics worthy of attention. All three date between the Hunter Commission of 1882 and the government resolution of 1900;⁴⁷ as a result, they portray a despised, rejected and despondent heroine, Hindi or Nagari,⁴⁸ and a proud, conceited and triumphant villainess, Urdu. In Datta's play, for example, one of Urdu's supporters, Begam Wanton-Pleasure, contrasts the two adversaries thus:

All have love for Urdu, ask anyone you want.

No one cares for Nagari, Nagari old and gaunt.⁴⁹

In Chandra's play, Maulvi Akil, one of Urdu's lawyers, presents a

counter-statement in which he asserts that 'the plaintiff [Hindi] has stayed so long in the jungle that . . . she is not even fit to live in the city, let alone come before a court of law. She has become a savage.'³⁰ Akil adds that even her own offspring consider her uncivilized and despise her, echoing the words of Shyam Sundar Das at the beginning of this chapter that 'Hindi speakers were regarded as stupid yokels.'³¹

The most dominant theme, which we have encountered before, contrasts the virtue and morality of Nagari or Hindi with the vice and immorality of Urdu with more subtle overtones and innuendoes than non-literary mediums.³² This theme allowed Hindi supporters both to enhance the value of their own and to diminish the value of their opponents' symbol. In all three works Urdu behaves like a woman of loose morals or a prostitute, though she is seldom openly labelled as such. In Datta's play, for example, Urdu's testimony to the Hindu judge, Maharajah Righteous-Rules, seems more like an indictment than a defense:

This is my work: passion I'll teach,
Your household tasks we'll leave in the breach.
We'll be lovers and rakes, living for pleasure,
Consorting with prostitutes, squandering our treasure.
Give heed, you officials, batten on graft,
Deceiving and thieving, till riches you've quaffed.
Lie to your betters and flatter each other,
Write down one thing, and read out another.'³³

Urdu's immorality, as Datta's words suggest, takes several forms. Her script leads to a great deal of fraud—Prasad's poem devotes many stanzas to possible misreadings of Urdu words—and thus harms the general public. Moreover, she corrupts Hindus and leads them astray from their own religious and cultural heritage. Perhaps worst of all, she and her mother, Persian—forced on the people by Muslim rulers—have replaced the golden age of justice and goodness under Hindi and her mother, Sanskrit, with a darker era of misrule and tyranny.

Datta, Chandra, and Prasad all agree with the twin equations Hindi = Hindu and Urdu = Muslim, though the latter two implicitly admit that Urdu = Muslim + Hindu by discussing the motives of those Hindus who support Urdu. In Chandra's play one of Hindi's lawyers, Pundit Buddhi Prakash (light of wisdom) explicitly equates language and religion when he identifies his client as 'Lady Hindi Devi, daughter of Sanskrit, caste Hindu, resident of Hindustan'.³⁴ The Pundit explains the embarrassing fact of extensive Hindu support for Urdu by economic necessity, which drives Kayasths and others to become devotees of

Urdu, though as Hindus they cannot totally reject Hindi. In Prasad's poem, an Urdu-loving Hindu, called on to give his opinion of Urdu, hesitates before speaking:

He thinks in his heart of hearts: now nothing but lies from me,
For if I speak against Urdu, out the window my service will be.
If Hindi enters my office, through begging my living I'll earn,
For we know nothing of Hindi—at home it's Urdu we learn."

Chandra's drama goes still deeper into the question of the motives of Hindus who support Urdu, by giving a whole scene to a dialogue between Hindi, her advocate Pandit Satyanand, and two Urdu defenders almost certainly Kayasths, Lala Ilahi Das and Khuda Ram. Satyanand berates his fellow Hindus for failing to consider their own welfare and that of their countrymen: they have dishonored Hindi, the real ruler of the country, and called in the foreigner Urdu to usurp her place. They have not only prospered unduly through Urdu's favours but also attacked their countrymen 'like mad dogs'. When Hindi meets the two Kayasths, she questions their motives, but they defend themselves by saying they wish to acquaint themselves with their possible future ruler. They justify themselves; Urdu's sweet speech and alluring glances, and the intemperate assaults of Hindi's partisans have led them to behave as they have. They address Hindi respectfully, calling her 'mother', but also point out the obstacles she faces, namely, Muslim opposition to Hindi, especially that of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, and government patronage of Urdu. In the end, they promise nothing.⁵⁶

Prasad's work goes far beyond the others in expressing anti-Muslim animosity, thinly disguised as tirades against Urdu by her adversary Hindi. Hindu calls Urdu a prostitute, a murderer, unclean, a wicked Muslim, and—because she is Muslim—low-caste. Hindi refers to Muslims as *mlecch*, a word with stinging connotations of alien, unclean, and vile. The two threaten each other with physical violence; Hindi tells Urdu that she will seize her by the hair, throw her down, and pull out her teeth. Hindus who worship the god of Muslims will spend many years in hell, says Hindi, and any Hindu who abandons Hinduism for Islam makes his mother wish she had never given birth to him. Hindi goes still further, and taunts Muslims with not following their own religious traditions: Muslims use intoxicating drugs and drink alcoholic beverages, they do not allow their widows to remarry despite the injunctions of the Koran, and they allow their women to sing during marriage ceremonies against Islamic principles.⁵⁷

One of the most significant parts of Prasad's publication occurs when he has Hindi raise the issue of cow slaughter. Anticipating the 1893 anti-

cow-slaughter movement, which reached the greatest intensity in the eastern NWP&O, he castigates his fellow Hindus, especially Hindu princes, for doing nothing while cows all over India are weeping and bawling in agony as they are butchered by *mlecch*'s. In a final plea for Hindu unity near the end of his poem, he links the two issues of cow slaughter and Hindi:

Let Hindi enter offices, cow killing cease to be,

Then India like the sun and moon will shine most splendidly.⁵⁸

This part of the poem gives us a revealing glimpse of the process of multi-symbol congruence: the author identifies Hindi, the cow, and patriotism with the master symbol of Hinduism. He expresses the dark side of the Hindi-Nagari movement—narrow, smugly pious, bigoted, and malicious.

Had these three works been expressed visually, they might have taken the form of an illustration which appeared in the November 1902 issue of *Saraswatī*, the leading journal of the Hindi literary world for many years. On the left stood a Muslim prostitute, decked out in all the finery of her profession. On the right, facing her rival, sat a Hindu matron, modestly clothed in an ordinary sari. The caption—'Hindi-Urdu'—and the Hindi dialogue below, clearly indicated that on the left stood Urdu personified and on the right sat Hindi. The author of the verses was Radha Krishna Das, a cousin of Bharatendu Harishchandra and a leading member of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras.⁵⁹

Precursors of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha

Several organizations promoted Hindi and Nagari before the founding of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha (NPS) in 1893, but none showed the staying power of the Banaras institution. Their activities foreshadowed those of their more effective successor, suggesting that the NPS did not so much innovate new policies as more successfully implement existing ones. The NPS became the only major Hindi organization founded in the nineteenth century to survive right up to the present; many other Hindi organizations came and went.

During the Hindi-Nagari campaign of 1882 a number of these organizations, which might otherwise have remained shrouded in obscurity, emerged into temporary prominence. The Satya Dharma-volambini Sabha (Society for Supporting the True Religion) of Aligarh, for example, came into existence in 1878, drawing supporters not only from the city and district of Aligarh, but also from other parts of the country.⁶⁰ By 1882, the organization had published a few books, written by members, in the Nagari script. The Aligarh Bhasha (i.e., Hindi) Improvement Society, founded a year earlier, had soon published

several works in Hindi on a variety of subjects. The general aim of the organization was to improve Hindi, regarded as the true vernacular of the country, through the publication of original works and the translation of other works from both ancient and modern world languages. By the time of the Hunter Commission, the Society had plans to give prizes of up to Rs 200 for books in Hindi on subjects considered important, e.g., Indian agriculture, female education, and chemistry, and had also established a small library. The membership of 150 came from all parts of India and included a few Europeans and Muslims. Members had no fees or subscriptions to pay, but had to purchase one copy of each work published by their organization. The Society discouraged difficult and uncommon Sanskrit words in these publications, and accepted Arabic and Persian words which had become part of Hindi through long usage.⁶¹

The Devanagari Pracharini Sabha of Meerut, founded by Pandit Gauri Datta, took part in the 1882 Hindi-Nagari campaign. By 1889 the Sabha had also established a school, the Devanagari Pathshala, in which children received a primary education in Hindi. In addition to the activities of Datta already mentioned above, the Sabha held frequent public meetings to celebrate auspicious events or to award prizes and certificates to the Pathshala's graduates. Some of these meetings resulted in memorials and addresses in favour of Hindi and Nagari, linked with expressions of loyalty to the British government. By 1895 the Meerut organization had established formal relations with its Banaras counterpart, the Nagari Pracharini Sabha. The former never achieved the prominence of the latter, however, and faded into obscurity by the beginning of the twentieth century.⁶²

Two other organizations, though devoting only a fraction of their efforts to the Hindi-Nagari movement, deserve mention, partly for their contributions and partly for their blend of Hindi and Hinduism. The first of these, the Hindu Samaj (Hindu Society) of Allahabad, came into being in 1880 under the leadership of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, later one of the most prominent members of the Indian National Congress. Though not listed among those organizations sending memorials to the Hunter Commission, the Samaj soon took up the cause of Hindi. In 1884 the Samaj began a drive to send memorials in favour of Hindi to both the Government of the NWP&O and the Government of India, though nothing ever seems to have resulted. Later in the same year the Samaj sponsored a conference at Allahabad to consider various matters, among them the promotion of Hindi to official court language. Over fifty persons from all over northern India attended the four-day

conference, including prominent landowners such as Raja Rampal Singh of Oudh. A year later the Samaj held a similar conference and again considered the question of Hindi. By 1889, when the Samaj held an anniversary meeting, the subject had receded into the background, although in 1890 the organization briefly—and unsuccessfully—agitated for the inclusion of Hindi in the University of Allahabad entrance examinations, and then lapsed into inactivity. By 1894 both Malaviya and Singh had joined the Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras.⁶³

The second of these, the Arya Samaj, a Hindu revivalist organization founded in 1875 by Swami Dayananda Saraswati, played an important role in the promotion of Hindi in the Punjab, and a lesser role elsewhere in north India. Dayananda himself became an active promoter of Hindi after meeting the Brahmo Samaj leader Keshab Chandra Sen, who advised him to make that language his medium. Subsequently the Swami used Hindi for speeches, polemical works, correspondence, and popular translations of Sanskrit scriptures. The earliest rules of the Samaj provided for a newspaper in Hindi, and later rules enjoined all members to learn either Sanskrit or Hindi.⁶⁴ In 1882 the Samaj took part in the Hindi-Nagari campaign and collected more than 5,000 signatures in the western NWP&O and in the Central Provinces.⁶⁵ An Oudh newspaper reported that the local Arya Samaj had sent a memorial in favour of Hindi to the Hunter Commission with the signatures of 1,366 Hindus and 69 Muslims.⁶⁶ Arya Samaj leaders, one of whom (Lala Lajpat Rai) confessed that he did not know the language at the time, actively promoted the cause of Hindi in the Punjab in 1882, and continued to lend their support as the Hindi-Nagari movement began to gather momentum in their province in the first decades of the twentieth century.⁶⁷ In all of these groups and their activities we can see elements of the processes through which ethnic groups become subjectively conscious communities: elites taking the lead in attaching value to a linguistic symbol, in differentiating Hindi speakers from Urdu speakers, and even in articulating political rights for themselves.

The Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras

The premier Hindi organization of the nineteenth century rose to prominence in an ideal location. Banaras, probably one of the oldest continually inhabited cities of the world, had achieved fame as a centre of sacred learning several centuries before the birth of Christ. Many prominent religious and literary figures had made their home there: the fifteenth century poet-saint Kabir; the sixteenth century poet Tulsi Das,

author of the *Rāmcharitmānas*, an immensely popular Avadhi version of the great Hindu Sanskrit epic, the *Rāmāyana*; Raja Shiva Prasad, and Bharatendu Harishchandra, key figures in the development of Khari Boli Hindi; and many others. Under British rule Banaras continued its tradition of learning, becoming the site of one of the oldest colleges established by the East India Company. Banaras Sanskrit College, dating from 1792, was intended to encourage the study of the Hindu linguistic, literary and religious heritage.⁶⁸

Banaras, long renowned for Sanskrit learning, had also become a major centre of Hindi (i.e., Braj Bhasha and Avadhi) literature by the early nineteenth century, and the largest publisher of Hindi works by the early twentieth. During the decade 1891–1901 the census showed Banaras to be the second largest city in the NWP&O, surpassed only by Lucknow, and also the most polyglot.

Thousands of Hindus from all over India visited or settled in Banaras, as one of the holiest sites of Hinduism. Speakers of Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Nepali, Rajasthani, Punjabi, Tamil and Telugu mingled with speakers of Bhojpuri and other Hindi dialects in the city's narrow streets and lanes, and princely families from Maharashtra, Bengal, Bihar and south India lined the banks of the sacred Ganga with many massive buildings. Just across the river lay the town of Ramnagar and the palace of the Hindu Maharaja of Banaras. In short, size, religious and literary heritage, a thriving publishing industry, possible princely patrons, and close contact with other Indian literary traditions made Banaras a uniquely suitable environment for the growth of the Sabha and the Hindi-Nagari movement.⁶⁹

The first meeting of what eventually became the Nagari Pracharini Sabha took place in Banaras in March 1893, ironically in a classroom used for teaching English in one of the buildings of Queen's Collegiate School.⁷⁰ Several schoolboys had decided to form a debating club whose chief aim soon became the promotion of Nagari (in the sense of both language and script). The fledgling organization led a precarious existence for a few months, driven from the classroom meeting place by schoolmates supporting Urdu, and gathering first in a nearby park and later in a room over the stables of the father of one of its more affluent members. During the summer holidays in May and June the little group temporarily disbanded, but reconvened in July. Twelve students came to this meeting, three of whom, Shyam Sundar Das, Ram Narayan Mishra, and Shiv Kumar Singh, were to remain members for the rest of their lives, and later came to be considered the joint founders of the

Sabha.⁷¹ Their long and stable relationship with the Sabha had much to do with the organization's long and stable existence.

All three spent much of their lives in Banaras and had careers in education. Thakur Shiv Kumar Singh, a Rajput, was born in Banaras district in 1872, and enrolled in Queen's Collegiate School to study English in 1888. He began his career as a teacher in 1897, gradually rising to the position of Deputy Inspector of Schools by the time of his retirement. He played a minor part in the history of the NPS. Pandit Ram Narayan Mishra came from a Saraswat Brahman family of Delhi. The influence of his maternal uncle, Dr Channulal, one of the leading members of the Arya Samaj in Banaras, brought him to Queen's to complete his education. After receiving his B.A. he became a member of the Provincial Education Service in which he held the rank of Deputy Inspector of Schools for ten years. After retiring from government service, he occupied the post of headmaster at several schools in Banaras, including Harishchandra High School (founded by Bharatendu Harishchandra) and Central Hindu School (founded among others by Mrs Annie Besant). He also was the unsalaried head of the D.A.V. (Dayananda Anglo-Vedic) College, an Arya Samaj institution in Banaras, for several years. He played a much more important role in the affairs of the Sabha than his Rajput colleague.⁷²

Shyam Sundar Das, who came from a Khatri family of small shopkeepers originally from the Punjab but residents of Banaras for three generations, had a deeper influence on the Sabha than either of his two associates. More than anyone else he charted the course of the Sabha and took a disproportionate share of literary and administrative burdens upon himself. He enrolled at Queen's after passing his Anglo-Vernacular Middle Examination in 1890, and succeeded in receiving his B.A. in 1896, after failing on his first attempt because of illness. Thereafter his career took him to a variety of institutions, mainly educational, including ten years at Central Hindu School, three years in the State Office of the Maharajah of Kashmir, nine years at Kalicharan High School in Lucknow, and sixteen years as the first head of the Department of Hindi at Banaras Hindu University. An indefatigable worker, Das earned the sobriquet of the 'soul' of the Sabha.⁷³

The three founders of the Sabha acquired their devotion to Hindi from several sources. Shiv Kumar Singh had learned to love Hindi through the influence of his village school teacher, who had introduced him to the writings of Bharatendu Harishchandra. Not long after his entrance into Queen's Collegiate School, Singh became acquainted

with two students from Gorakhpur, one a nephew of Harishchandra, who acquainted him with more of Bharatendu's writings and also introduced him to friends and relatives of the late author. Among these were Radha Krishna Das, later to become the first president of the Sabha, a cousin of Bharatendu, and Shri Jagannath Das 'Ratnakar', a renowned poet of Braj Bhasha, also to become a member of the Sabha. Ram Narayan Mishra gained some of his fondness for Hindi from his maternal uncle, whose Arya Samaj affiliations influenced him in favour of that language. Shyam Sundar Das first began to take note of Hindi as a boy of ten when his studies at a local school exposed him to Tulsi Das's *Rāmcharitmānas* and brought him into contact with Babu Gadadhar Singh, the head clerk of a government office in the neighbouring district of Mirzapur. Singh had collected a small library of Hindi books which found a home at Das's school, and had also translated several books from Bengali into Hindi.⁷⁴

By the end of the first year the membership of the Sabha had grown to 84, of whom 46 came from Banaras. The Sabha's roster included a number of distinguished men: Dr G. E. Grierson, author of the *Linguistic Survey of India*; Raja Rampal Singh; Madan Mohan Malaviya; Devki Nandan Khatri, a widely popular Hindi author; Shridhar Pathak, one of the first poets of Khari Boli Hindi; Ram Krishna Varma, the Khatri publisher of the Hindi weekly *Bharat Jivan* of Banaras; and Radha Krishna Das, cousin of Bharatendu and Hindi author and poet in his own right. The membership of Das, who had hesitated for several months before joining the Sabha in January 1894, fearing that it might prove to be a short-lived failure, did much to increase the organization's prestige. Moreover, through his efforts many friends and associates of the late Bharatendu joined, further enhancing the Sabha's stature.⁷⁵

The Sabha's membership list for 1894 shows several notable aspects of the social origins of Hindi supporters. Brahmans, Bhumihars (considered a Brahman caste by some), Rajputs, Agarwals and Vaishyas (the latter two both classifiable as Banias, a generic term for merchant castes) together accounted for over 60 per cent of the total, and Brahmans alone over 40 per cent.⁷⁶ These same groups had predominated in the indigenous Hindi schools many decades previously, and had made up the bulk of the non-Kayasth Hindu candidates for the Anglo-Vernacular Middle and Vernacular Middle Examinations a decade earlier (see Chapter IV). The proportion of Khatri—over 15 per cent—seems surprising when we recall the Khatri tradition of Persian and Urdu learning. Perhaps the greater occupational diversity of Khatri, especially

in business, made them less dependent on government service than their fellow Hindus, the Kayasths.⁷⁷

Of the 73 members whose caste could be ascertained, only two were Kayasths, and none Kashmiri Brahmans. Though the Sabha approached the Kayasth community on more than one occasion, nothing ever resulted. Looking back over nearly fifty years of pro-Hindi efforts by the Sabha, Shyam Sundar Das wrote disparagingly of both these groups:

If Kayasths and Kashmiris would place themselves on the side of Hindi, then a great deal of help would be gained for promoting Hindi. But when among Kashmiri pandits there are even those individuals who consider it their good fortune to accept Urdu as their 'mother tongue' [written ironically in words of Persian origin] then what hope can there be?⁷⁸

Not surprisingly, no members were Muslim, although four years later the roster included a single Muslim name, Syed Akbar Husain, and a year later two more. Though nothing in the Sabha's rules prohibited Muslim members, they never constituted more than a minuscule fraction of the Sabha's supporters.⁷⁹ The composition of the Sabha's membership explicitly suggested that the equation Hindi = Hindu, and implicitly the equation Urdu = Muslim + Hindu still held true.

The geographical distribution of the Sabha's membership, like its social origins, paralleled other patterns. The majority of the members came from areas where Hindi students predominated in government schools and where Hindi publications outnumbered others (see Chapter IV). In 1894 about 80 per cent of the membership came from the NWP&O, and 85 per cent of these came from the eastern NWP, with 70 per cent from Banaras itself. Ten years later these proportions had shifted to 70 per cent from the NWP&O, 61 per cent of these from the east and 33 per cent from Banaras. By 1914, 70 per cent still came from the NWP&O, but only 50 per cent of these from the east and 25 per cent from Banaras. In sum, for the first twenty years the Sabha remained an overwhelmingly north Indian organization, and continued to be centred in the NWP&O. Within the home province, however, a shift away from the lopsided dominance of the eastern NWP and Banaras district took place, mirroring the shift occurring about the same time in Hindi publishing (see Chapter IV). In overall terms, the Sabha's membership increased steadily from 1894 until 1915, when the number of members began a gradual decline for the next ten years and finally stabilized at a level the Sabha had reached during its eleventh year.⁸⁰

The Sabha's financial support came from a number of sources

including dues, book sales, loans, government aid, and donations of various sorts including large amounts from princely patrons. During the first six years, the organization faced severe financial difficulties, for annual income averaged only Rs 500 and a large percentage of this came from the somewhat unstable sources of dues and donations. In its seventh year (1899–1900) the Sabha first received financial aid from the Government of the NWP&O, and in the next few years annual income increased by leaps and bounds, reaching a high point during a fund-raising campaign for a permanent headquarters building. During the Sabha's eighth and ninth years, the annual income expanded to nearly five times the level of the first six years, and thereafter, though considerable fluctuations of income occurred, the Sabha's financial condition remained viable.⁸¹

Donations provided a substantial portion of the Sabha's income, as suggested above. Just how substantial became apparent when the Sabha published a list of all donors—government, princely, and private—for its first thirty years. This document revealed that donations accounted for more than one-third (37 per cent) of the organization's total income. Various levels of government accounted for a little over 13 per cent (with the Government of the NWP&O topping the list at more than 9 per cent), princely donors for nearly 12 per cent, and private donors for the remainder of about 12 per cent. (The roster of Hindu princes included the Maharajas of Gwalior, Rewah, Bikaner, Chatrapur, Alwar and Banaras, all of whom became recognized patrons of the Sabha.) Of the nearly 24 per cent from non-governmental sources, over 43 per cent came from Rajasthan with only 14 per cent of the membership in 1924.⁸²

The heavy reliance of the Sabha on government and on politically conservative Rajasthan (which together furnished nearly a quarter of the average annual income for the first thirty years) clearly indicated that the Banaras organization did not intend to take political risks. Unlike the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan (Society for Hindi Literature) of Allahabad, whose members included political leaders of national stature such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajendra Prasad and Mahatma Gandhi, the Sabha took little part in any political activity associated with the Indian National Congress. For the most part, the Sabha laboured to promote Hindi and Nagari through literary activities.⁸³

In this area after little more than a decade the Sabha could point to a number of accomplishments: establishing a series of prizes for Nagari handwriting and Hindi literature, founding a library of Hindi and English books and journals, initiating a search for old Hindi manuscripts

—later to win critical acclaim, starting two long-lived and successful journals, producing numerous Hindi textbooks, publishing several classics of 'Hindi' literature (i.e., in Braj Bhasha and other literary dialects), compiling a Hindi dictionary of scientific terms, and constructing a permanent headquarters building.⁸⁴ In most of these endeavours the Sabha was carrying out activities similar to those of its predecessors, but on a larger scale and more successfully.

During the same period the Sabha garnered considerable prestige by leading a campaign to secure the recognition of the Nagari script by the Government of the NWP&O. The Hindi elite who led the Sabha had clearly begun to articulate and even acquire political rights, even though Hindus had hardly become a cohesive group at the level of a 'nationality'. Indeed the Sabha's success in this activity, though not leading to further political exertions, gave considerable fillip to the organization's continuing literary efforts.

Before turning to examine the role played by the Sabha in bringing about the official recognition of the Nagari script, we must briefly examine its language attitudes.⁸⁵ The official principles of the organization, embodied in a report written after an extensive survey of various Hindi authorities, seemed to place the Sabha in a moderate position concerning the proper style for Hindi. In practice, however, the language of many of its publications was highly Sanskritized. Moreover, the Sabha made explicit which certain kinds of publications merited praise: in 1897 these included a work in Braj Bhasha by the sixteenth century poet Surdas, another in a mixture of Braj and other literary dialects by the seventeenth century poet Bihari, a volume on integral calculus, and a translation of a Bengali novel into Hindi. Members of the Sabha had written or edited all of these.⁸⁶

The Sabha also expressed literary opinions implicitly. Despite the fact that the novels of Devki Nandan Khatri had won a wider circle of readers than any other vernacular works of their time, and that Khatri became an early member and even General Secretary of the Sabha for a year, no mention of his literary efforts ever appeared in the annual reports. One can therefore surmise that Khatri's writings, which would certainly have been considered 'Hindustani' by the Sabha, fell below the standards the organization had set for good Hindi literature. A passage from the autobiography of Shyam Sundar Das written years later bears out this inference:

I think that there is danger of great harm to Hindi from the promotion of Hindustani, because the advocates of Hindustani are especially those

people who are badly acquainted with Hindi or not at all, but are well acquainted with Urdu. Besides this, the creation of elevated works of literature is not possible in Hindustani.⁸⁷

Das went on to say that Hindustani could never embody the common religious and cultural heritage of the Hindus of India, because this style replaced Sanskrit words with Urdu words, striking a mortal blow at the very root of Hindi. The use of Hindustani would sever the connections of the Hindus of the UP with other parts of the country, e.g., Bengal, Maharashtra, and Gujarat.

Perhaps most revealing was the Sabha's controversy with its first President, Pandit Lakshmi Shankar Mishra, who held office from 1894 to 1902. Mishra was the holder of an M.A., then a rare accomplishment, one of the first scholars to publish on the subject of science in Hindi, and a highly-placed official in the provincial Educational Department who had made efforts to increase the use of Hindi in government schools.⁸⁸ Matters came to a head in 1902 when Mishra, writing to the Provincial Text-Book Committee, argued that an 'attempt should be made to assimilate the two forms [Urdu and Hindi] into one language, which may be called Hindustani, and may be written either in the Persian character or the Nagri character'.⁸⁹ Since the *raison d'être* of the Sabha lay in the differentiation of Hindi from Urdu, any attempt to combine them or to eliminate or reduce their differences undermined the very foundations of the organization. Mishra resigned soon after and the Sabha found another President.

The Hindi-Nagari Campaign of 1895–1900

The Sabha's earliest efforts to change government language policy came in the form of a letter to the provincial Board of Revenue, pointing out that Act XIX of 1875 and Act XII of 1881 enjoined officials to fill out summons and other documents in both Hindi and Urdu. Since these rules had remained a dead letter in practice, however, the Sabha asked the Board to enforce them. Receiving no answer for nearly two years, the Sabha sent a memorial to the Government of the NWP&O, whereupon the latter issued a circular letter late in 1896 instructing officials of all districts to have all Board of Revenue summons and similar documents completed in both Hindi and Urdu. This fresh reminder of the rules had little effect.⁹⁰

The arrival of Sir Antony MacDonnell as the new Lieutenant-Governor in 1895 gave new hope to the champions of Hindi and Nagari. MacDonnell's record in Bihar, where he had supported the

change to the Nagari and Kaithi scripts, led many to believe that he would support a similar change in the NWP&O.⁹¹ Soon after his accession, MacDonnell paid a visit to Banaras, and the Sabha wasted no time in sending him an address of welcome. The Lieutenant-Governor's reply expressed interest in the question of the substitution of Hindi for Urdu as the official language of the courts but avoided any commitment to any definite opinion beyond the promise that he would give the matter his attention at some future time. A major drought and famine occupied much of MacDonnell's attention during 1896-97, but early in 1898 he found the time to meet a delegation of leading Hindu citizens which asked him to elevate Nagari to the dignity of an official script and presented him with a memorial bearing many thousands of signatures. Nevertheless, he gave little time to the issue until mid-1899 when he initiated the process of inquiry and deliberation which eventually led to the official recognition of Hindi and Nagari.⁹²

Soon after MacDonnell's visit to Banaras, leaders of the Sabha and other Hindi supporters, encouraged by MacDonnell's response and by other signs,⁹³ began to devote their energy to a province-wide campaign. In the summer of 1896 the Sabha appointed a special sub-committee for this task, and sent representatives to at least nineteen districts, mainly in the eastern part of the province. Radha Krishna Das travelled to the western districts of Meerut and Muzzaffarnagar where he received considerable help from the Meerut Devanagari Pracharini Sabha, while Shyam Sundar Das journeyed to Allahabad and Lucknow. The Sabha's representative collected over 60,000 signatures, which compared favourably with the 67,000 gathered during the Hunter Commission campaign. The memorial which accompanied the signature did not ask for a change in the court language or for the elimination of the Urdu script, but rather requested that 'the written character of the immense majority of the people [i.e., the Nagari script] should be used in Government courts, and all summonses, decisions and decrees should be issued in that character.'⁹⁴

The sentiments of the Sabha's memorial echoed those expressed in a book by Madan Mohan Malaviya entitled *Court Character and Primary Education in the N.-W. P. and Oudh*.⁹⁵ Malaviya, leader of the Hindu Samaj which had made some desultory efforts for Hindi several years earlier, and already an important figure in the Indian National Congress, came from a Malaviya Brahman family of Allahabad. His father and grandfather had had reputations as Sanskrit scholars, and Malaviya himself studied Sanskrit in his childhood and went on to learn Hindi,

Urdu and English. He graduated from the University of Calcutta in 1884 and the next year began a career as a teacher. Soon he changed to a career in journalism, and became the editor of the Hindi daily *Hindustan* from 1887 to 1889 at the invitation of the proprietor, Raja Rampal Singh. In 1892 Malaviya received an LL.B. and began the practice of law with considerable success, becoming a lawyer at the Allahabad High Court in 1893. He went on to become President of the Indian National Congress in 1909 and again in 1918, and to found Banaras Hindu University in 1916.* After joining the Sabha early in 1894, he remained a member for more than twenty years, and on the important occasion of the 1898 delegation to MacDonnell, he acted as the Sabha's representative.⁹⁷

Malaviya's book, presented to MacDonnell on that occasion along with the Sabha's memorial, fell into four parts: the first dealt with the historical background of the linguistic situation, the second with the merits of the Nagari and the defects of the Urdu script, the third with the relation of the official language and script to education, while the fourth contained dozens of supporting documents. In the first section Malaviya repeated the oft-asserted idea that 'Hindi' had served as the medium of public business in much of north India before the Muslim invasions of medieval times, traced the history of Muslim and British language policy, and asserted that the bulk of the population understood 'Hindi' but found Urdu unintelligible. In the second section, he reiterated most of the arguments already used over and over again by critics of the Urdu script, especially its *shikasta* form.⁹⁸ In the third section, which contained the heart of his argument, Malaviya linked the deficiencies of the provincial educational system—especially primary education—to the fact that in the NWP&O the official language and script differed from the language and script most widely known and taught. In other provinces such as Bihar and the Central Provinces or even in the hill districts of his own province, he pointed out, education had progressed more satisfactorily because no such linguistic mutilation existed. To remedy this situation the government had only to substitute the Nagari script for the Persian (Urdu) in courts and offices; no change in the official language should prove necessary, for the introduction of the Nagari script would naturally lead to a simpler style closer to the language of the people.⁹⁹

Although well-written, persuasive, and thoroughly documented, Malaviya's book contained important flaws in reasoning and also reflected the narrow interests of a professional class. On more than one occasion he fell into the error of identifying Hindi and Urdu with their

respective scripts. In some places he urged a change of script only, while in others he spoke for a change of both script and language. His linguistic panacea for all the troubles of the educational system grossly oversimplified a complex situation. Though he frequently invoked the welfare of the masses as the most pressing reason for a change in policy, the very title of his book suggested that he, as a lawyer, was more concerned for the interests of the professional classes which had sprung up around the British-initiated judicial system. Thus he paid as much attention to the few hundred candidates for the Middle Class Anglo-Vernacular Examination as he did to the tens of thousands of children in primary schools, and he ignored the fact that the vast bulk of the population could never aspire to government service whatever the official language or script. Moreover, he overlooked the consideration that large numbers of students at both primary and secondary levels continued to study Hindi, which suggested that the language had other social uses—such as keeping business accounts, maintaining land records, and carrying on private correspondence—than preparing candidates for government service.¹⁰⁰ Finally, he failed to mention even once the widespread use of the Kaithi script, both in the NWP&O and elsewhere.

The most important shortcoming in Malaviya's work, which vitiated much of his argument, came from his ambiguous use of the word 'Hindi'. The 'Hindi' in use when the Muslims came to India, the 'Hindi' in use in government schools, and the 'Hindi' in use by the masses of the NWP&O blended into one monolithic entity stretching far back into the past and sprawling great distances across India. The first 'Hindi' referred to north Indian languages generally or to various literary dialects such as Braj Bhasha and Avadhi, the second to a highly Sanskritized Khari Boli Hindi (the style promoted by most Hindi enthusiasts), and the third to various local dialects or regional standards such as Bhojpuri, Avadhi, Braj Bhasha, and Khari Boli.¹⁰¹

The same mythical 'Hindi' appeared in the Sabha's first annual report, which credited Hindi literature with an age of eight centuries. The Muslim invasion of India, said the Sabha, had prevented the further progress of Hindi. India's new rulers, seeing that they could not settle in India unless they knew Hindi, and wishing to avoid Sanskrit-mixed Hindi, created Persian-mixed Hindi or Urdu. When the Sabha talked of the distant past, only 'Hindi' was mentioned, but when the Sabha talked of the more recent past, phrases like 'Braji Bhasha or Hindi' were used. The meaning of 'Hindi' expanded when moving backwards in time, but

contracted when moving forwards. To give 'Hindi' a glorious past one had to include all of her elder sisters, but when one came to the present only the youngest sister—Khari Boli Hindi—received attention.¹⁰² This basic contradiction reflected the need to invest the symbol 'Hindi' with dignity and to mask the embarrassing fact that the rise of Sanskritized Khari Boli Hindi could hardly have occurred without the previous widespread use of Urdu. We can reasonably conjecture that this form of Hindi represented the creation of a new style of language according to the time-honoured formula of the Sanskritization of an existing form. Only such a transformation could make Hindi an acceptable symbol for the process of multi-symbol congruence which expressed itself in the equation Hindi = Hindu.

The same arguments, assumptions and shortcomings found in the writings of Malaviya and the reports and memorials of the Sabha began to fill the pages of the vernacular press once more. Articles and letters on the issue of Hindi versus Urdu began to appear more and more frequently in both Hindi and Urdu newspapers in 1897, swelled to a torrent in 1898, flooded the columns in 1899 and 1900, and quickly subsided by 1901. The same arguments and counter-arguments repeated themselves again and again with occasional new twists such as the writer who argued that the encouragement of the Nagari script would benefit the cause of female education and thereby transform Indian women from shrews into models of amity.¹⁰³ Most writers, whether Hindi or Urdu partisans, spoke in uncompromising tones: either Hindi and the Nagari script or Urdu and the Urdu script should have official status. Few advocated the use of both. Many, though not all, identified Hindus with Hindi and Muslims with Urdu, and many confused language and script. Before the 1900 resolution of government recognizing Hindi and Nagari, Hindi newspapers published most of the polemical materials, after the decision Urdu papers indulged in the same kind of articles.¹⁰⁴

While the controversy raged in the vernacular press, the Sabha conducted a vigorous campaign to influence the government, particularly MacDonnell. Not long after the Lieutenant-Governor returned from a leave late in 1898, Malaviya informed officials of the Sabha that Sir Antony intended to make a tour of the western NWP&O to determine the real feelings of the people on the language issue. On Malaviya's advice the Sabha sent Shyam Sundar Das and another member to several western cities where they met leading citizens and founded organizations for the promotion of Nagari not long before MacDonnell's own visit. About the same time the Sabha sent the Lieutenant-Governor

another memorial, and letter after letter and thousands of signatures began to pour into his office. The Sabha also published and distributed thousands of copies of a pamphlet in English entitled 'Should Nagari be Introduced in the Courts?'¹⁰⁵

A nearly religious fervour animated all these activities. The annual report of the Sabha for 1897-98 condemned as bigots those who opposed the recognition of Nagari, and declared that any thoughtful person could see that the progress of education, the spread of justice, the destruction of forgery, and the establishment of good relations between ruler and subjects all depended on this change. Even the Kayasths aided the Sabha's efforts for a while. In 1899 the Kayasth Conference, founded in Lucknow to advance the interests of Kayasths and to promote reforms in Kayasth society, passed a resolution favouring the introduction of the Nagari script in government courts and offices and sent a memorial to the Lieutenant-Governor.¹⁰⁶

The 1900 Decision: The Machinery of Deliberation

While the Sabha was conducting a vigorous campaign and the vernacular press was indulging in high-flown rhetoric, the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh was pursuing a leisurely process of investigation which began in July 1899 and continued until April 1900, when the Lieutenant-Governor issued a resolution purporting to give the Nagari script a status equal to that of the Urdu. During the course of this inquiry MacDonnell consulted with the provincial Board of Revenue, the High Court of the North-Western Provinces, and the Judicial Commissioner of Oudh. Further consultation with the Government of India after the issuance of the resolution brought the promulgation of a modified version a month later. Despite the length of these deliberations, their outcome only added to the existing confusion. Though hailed as a great victory for the champions of Hindi and lamented as a calamitous defeat by the defenders of Urdu, once the uproar had died down, little had actually changed.¹⁰⁷

The series of documents setting forth the process of inquiry reveals several striking features, not the least remarkable of these being the rapid geographical expansion of Hindi in the letters of the provincial government. Writing to the Board of Revenue in July 1899 the Lieutenant-Governor asked for opinions of various reforms concerning the Nagari script proposed for the appropriate areas, namely, the three easternmost divisions of Gorakhpur, Banaras, and Allahabad. Seven months later in a letter to the Judicial Commissioner of Oudh, the Government of the

NWP&O referred to these three divisions and Agra division as those in which Hindi was 'by far the most prevalent language', and added that it was 'very largely used' in the western divisions of Meerut and Rohilkhand as well.¹⁰⁸ In a May 1900 letter to the Government of India the provincial government claimed:

Hindi is the language of the vast majority of the inhabitants of these Provinces. Throughout the whole of Oudh and in Gorakhpur, Benares, Allahabad, Agra and Kumaun Divisions, it is the language of the people. It is more largely spoken than Urdu in the Meerut and Rohilkhand Divisions.¹⁰⁹

In ten months the spread of Hindi from the eastern divisions to the entire province was wonderful to behold!

Comparisons of several of the documents reveal a good deal of fuzzy thinking about language and script. In a February 1900 letter to the High Court of the NWP the government referred to Hindi as a 'language' while in the April resolution Hindi had become a 'character'. The same confusion appeared in the government's May 1900 letter to the Government of India:

I am to state for the information of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council, that Hindi is the *language* of the vast majority of these Provinces. . . . The proscription of the Hindi *character* in public offices has long been a cause of discontent . . .¹¹⁰

This muddle did not escape the eye of an observer in London, C. J. Lyall, the Secretary of the Judicial and Public Department of the India Office at the time. Lyall, the author of a work on Hindustani grammar, wrote that the 'NWP letter of 4th May displays much confusion of thought as to the use of the words Urdu & Hindi for difference of *language*, whereas the sole question at issue is one not of *language*, but of *character*.'¹¹¹ The Government of India did little better in commenting on the April resolution of the provincial government. Rule (3) of this resolution had used the terms 'Nagri and Persian characters' while the Government of India replaced these with the 'Hindi and Urdu . . . languages', displaying a almost incredible lack of clarity and precision.¹¹² The obtuseness of the supreme government seems almost perverse because MacDonnell's resolution had clearly stated that he intended to deal with script only and not with language.¹¹³

The clearest heads in the whole process belonged to the Board of Revenue who recognized that no 'Hindi' spoken generally by the people existed, and that Khari Boli had assumed two extreme forms which they labelled 'Pandit's Hindi' and 'Persianized Urdu'. The junior member of the Board, D. T. Roberts, displayed a superior grasp of another facet of

the situation. He remarked that the Kaithi script had a currency nearly equal to that of the Nagari in the province as a whole, while in the eastern districts Kaithi had practically superseded Nagari for ordinary manuscript. The proposals which the government had presented to the Board, he continued, mentioned only the Nagari script, but to allow the use of the Nagari and not the Kaithi as well would prove largely in vain because of the lack of any practised Nagari writers for the courts and offices. If the government wished to allow those dealing with the courts to use the script most familiar to them, then in the eastern districts at least, that script should be Kaithi and not Nagari.¹¹⁴

The April 1900 resolution of the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, however, took no notice of the Kaithi script in the new rules, which read as follows:

- (1) All persons may present their petitions or complaints either in the Nagri or in the Persian character, as they shall desire.
- (2) All summonses, proclamations, and the like in vernacular issuing to the public from the Courts or from Revenue officials, shall be in the Persian and the Nagri characters, and the portion in the latter shall invariably be filled up as well as that in the former.
- (3) No person shall be appointed, except in a purely English office, to any ministerial appointment henceforward unless he can read and write both the Nagri and Persian characters fluently.¹¹⁵

In failing to give Kaithi recognition, the Government of the NWP&O continued a long-standing tradition of opposition on the part of both government officials and Hindi-Nagari supporters.¹¹⁶

The new rules displayed other elements of continuity, for in fact all of the second and most of the third rule already existed. The second was the very rule which the Nagari Pracharini Sabha had earlier asked the Board of Revenue to enforce, while the third was already in effect for persons appointed to executive positions. As the Board of Revenue had remarked in its reply to the provincial government, these rules were 'prescribed at present, but not sufficiently insisted upon'.¹¹⁷

Only the first rule represented an innovation, yet several considerations made enforcement impossible. While there was a class of government officials, legal practitioners, petition writers, and numerous other petty officials with a strong vested interest in maintaining the Persian (Urdu) script, no corresponding class for the Nagari script existed. In rejecting the Kaithi script the leaders of the Hindi-Nagari movement also rejected the possibility of a ready-made class of minor officials to replace that already entrenched. The experience of F. J. Shore with this class sixty years earlier in the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories,¹¹⁸ and

the experience of MacDonnell himself in Bihar should have made it obvious that only orders enjoining the *exclusive* use of Nagari as the court script could bring about any real change. The Government of the NWP&O had ordered only the *permissive* use of Nagari, had created no incentives for the development of a new class of Nagari-knowing writers and officials, and had provided no sanctions to enforce this new rule or the two older rules, which had been continuously ignored in the past. In short, while the resolution of April 1900 seemed to be an important political victory for the Hindi-Nagari movement, the triumph was little more than a symbolic one, and had few practical results.

The Aftermath of the 1900 Decision

MacDonnell's decree took most Urdu partisans by surprise. After all, the Hindi-Nagari movement had been sputtering along in fits and starts for more than three decades with no visible result, so why should any renewed efforts be taken seriously? A few concerned supporters took steps to protect Urdu: several lawyers, mainly Muslims, established an Urdu Defence Association at Allahabad not long after MacDonnell's meeting with the pro-Nagari delegation in March 1898; the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental Educational Conference, a creation of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, passed a resolution in 1899 protesting any official recognition of the Nagari script; a large anti-Congress meeting held in Lucknow in December 1899 condemned the proposal to substitute the 'Hindi' for the Persian script; and a group of Muslims from the eastern district of Pratapgarh sent a memorial to the Lieutenant-Governor complaining that the movement to adopt Hindi as the court language clearly aimed at excluding Muslims from public service.¹¹⁹ For the most part, however, Muslims and other Urdu partisans disregarded the potential threat. Hamid Ali Khan, a prominent Muslim barrister and member of the Indian National Congress, found his efforts to warn fellow Muslims pooh-poohed.¹²⁰

The April resolution galvanized Urdu's defenders into action. They held scores of meetings all over the province, passed resolutions condemning the new rules, sent memorials, letters, and telegrams to the provincial and imperial governments, and formed several organizations to protect Urdu. Some expressed highly emotional and exaggerated feelings of shock and dismay. For example, in a letter in the *Indian Daily Telegraph* a month after the resolution's promulgation, a Muslim wrote:

... this new calamity [the resolution] ... hangs above our head; we are required thereby to wander amidst the zigzag of the strange and horrible

characters of the Deo-Nagri and to bid farewell to the language which reminds us [of] the glory of our forefathers . . . Is it not the severest suffering for a man of the slightest sentiment?¹²¹

Others complained that the change threatened Muslim businesses and Islamic literature, that the people found the Nagari script no less foreign than the Persian, that even the partial substitution of Hindi for Urdu would retard the progress of the province, that MacDonnell had reversed a long-standing policy, and that the resolution would harm Muslim prospects for the public service.¹²²

Sir Antony stood firm in the midst of the storm of protests. He defended himself by declaring that his measure provided 'the merest justice to over 90 per cent of the people of these Provinces, including the poorest classes of Mahomedans as well as Hindus'.¹²³ In a letter to the Government of India he asserted that the provisions of his resolution allowed no tenable objections, though some 'extreme Muhammadans . . . would prohibit the use of Hindi altogether from short-sighted motives of personal, race, or religious intolerance'.¹²⁴ Elsewhere he noted that the opposition to his decree came largely from Muslim members of the legal profession, and hardly at all from any of the important landlords or from the agricultural and industrial interests of the province.¹²⁵ In the meantime, as if to justify a decision already made, MacDonnell ordered an investigation to determine the respective numbers of Hindu and Muslim clerks in provincial courts and offices familiar with Hindi or Urdu or both. The results, though almost certainly skewed in favour of Hindi, showed that Muslims had a heavy vested interest in Urdu, while Hindus, though rivalling Muslims in knowledge of Urdu, far surpassed them in Hindi.¹²⁶

The most determined opposition came from Aligarh, home of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College founded by the recently deceased (1898) Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, the Secretary of the College, Theodore Morison, the Principal, and many prominent Muslims from Aligarh, other western districts of the NWP&O, and the Punjab, took part in a protest meeting less than a month after the resolution was proclaimed. From this meeting grew another on a larger scale, held three months later in Lucknow under the direction of Mohsin-ul-Mulk. Several hundred delegates came from the NWP&O, the Punjab, the Central Provinces, and elsewhere. Many Muslim students and merchants came from Lucknow itself. A number of Hindus attended the meeting, among them Pandit Kedarnath of Banaras, and some Indian Christians also took part. The numerous Muslim landlords of Oudh, however, were conspicuous by their absence.¹²⁷

Despite the lack of support from some quarters, the gathering took place with considerable panache: when Mohsin-ul-Mulk arrived at the station, he was greeted by a guard of sixty Muslim volunteers wearing red badges embroidered with the word 'Urdu' on their chests.¹²⁸

Most of the eleven resolutions passed by the meeting expressed the already time-worn arguments in favour of Urdu and against Hindi. The eleventh resolution, however, foreshadowed the birth of an organization for the promotion of Urdu very much like the Nagari Pracharini Sabha. This resolution gave the meeting the right to establish a society for the defence of Urdu and to collect subscriptions for it. No permanent organization resulted until January 1903, when the Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu (Society for the Progress of Urdu) came into being as part of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental Education Conference. For the first nine years, the Anjuman's headquarters remained at Aligarh, and its leaders were associated with the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College. Though the new society accomplished little during these years compared to the Sabha, the Anjuman eventually rose to prominence as the leading Urdu organization of India.¹²⁹

The Lieutenant-Governor did not allow these expressions of opposition to go unchecked. Several weeks before the Lucknow meeting he persuaded a prominent Muslim landlord of Oudh, Kunvar Ali Khan, to resign the presidency of the Urdu Defence Association. A speech at Banaras in which MacDonnell described efforts against his resolution as 'unreasonable and mischievous' caused other Muslim notables to take alarm and withdraw their support from the Urdu movement.¹³⁰ He reserved his severest measures for Aligarh, which he visited in November 1900. While he took pains to reassure a gathering of Muslims there that no harm could come to Urdu, Sir Antony declared that if the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College wished to continue receiving government funds and if Mohsin-ul-Mulk wished to retain his position as Secretary to the College Committee, he would have to sever all connections with the anti-Nagari agitation. The Nawab eventually yielded, submitted a written apology, ended his connection with the Urdu Defence Association, and refused to sign a memorial which the Association had prepared. Many other eminent Muslims followed his example, and by 1901 the whole affair had come to an inglorious end.¹³¹

Paralleling the protests of the defenders of Urdu, the wave of controversy in the press which had been gathering strength for many months finally crested and burst with the proclamation of the April resolution. Thereafter the conflict flooded the columns of both English and

vernacular newspapers for many months until finally subsiding well into 1901. While many of the arguments had appeared time and again previously, some merit further attention.

Several writers expressed the oft-mentioned equations of Hindi = Hindu and Urdu = Muslim more starkly than ever before. On the Hindu side one of the most extreme statements came from a public notice circulated with issues of the Hindi monthly *Brajbasi* (Brindaban). This document urged all Hindus to use 'the Hindi character'. Any Hindu who continued to use the foreign Persian script did not even deserve to be called a Hindu.¹³² On the Muslim side an equally extreme statement came from the Urdu weekly *Al Bashir*, exhorting all Muslims to consider attendance at an upcoming meeting at Lucknow in support of Urdu more important than the traditional religious duty of a pilgrimage to Mecca.¹³³ Underneath such dramatic statements lay fears for the future of Urdu. Many writers expressed their apprehension that even the optional use of the Nagari script would eventually lead to the complete extinction of Urdu. None stated Muslim misgivings as clearly as a correspondent of the *Punjab Observer* who conjectured that the introduction of Nagari would lead to the abolition of Urdu which would in turn cause Muslim boys to become Hindu in thought and expression.¹³⁴ One could hardly find clearer examples of the process of multi-symbol congruence.

Such extreme misgivings partly stemmed from an exaggerated notion of the power of the government to bring about linguistic changes. Again and again opponents of the resolution wrote as if change could take place overnight, and they seldom mentioned the entrenched resistance facing the introduction of the Nagari script. They forgot the example of Bihar, where the permissive introduction of Nagari had failed to bring any significant change, and even its mandatory and exclusive introduction had met with difficulties. A striking example of this naive faith in the powers of the government came from a resident of Aligarh writing in the *Indian Daily Telegraph*:

Let us consider that if Urdu were to be substituted for Gujarati in the Bombay Presidency, what would be the result? Each and every person will, the next day the Resolution is passed, be seen with an Urdu primer in his hands, and will not in the least care if Gujarati is to live or to perish, as his existence, so to speak, depends on his knowledge of Urdu.¹³⁵

Such views also underlined the fact that those most concerned about the resolution were those who looked to government for employment.

The most extended Muslim statement in defence of Urdu, a direct

reply to Malaviya's *Court Character and Primary Education*, appeared in July 1900. Bearing the title *A Defence of the Urdu Language and Character*, and published under the auspices of the Urdu Defence Association of Allahabad, this work repeated many earlier arguments, added some new ones, and severely criticized several of Malaviya's basic pronouncements. Unlike the more extreme writers in the vernacular press, the Association argued that Urdu belonged to both Hindus and Muslims, and explicitly denied the equations Hindi = Hindu and Urdu = Muslim. Moreover, since both Urdu and Hindi shared the same fundamental grammar, they were not distinct languages. To call the spoken language Urdu or Hindi, then, amounted to a 'mere difference of opinion'.¹³⁶ Judged from the viewpoint of those with a taste for Persian, this language became Urdu; judged from the viewpoint of those with an inclination to Sanskrit, Hindi. To quarrel over nomenclature was 'simply fighting over a shadow and useless speculation'.¹³⁷ In short, the Association declared that Urdu = Hindi and Urdu = Hindu + Muslim, explicitly arguing for assimilation rather than differentiation.

Two of the Association's more important arguments deserve consideration, namely, that dealing with the relationship of the official script to primary education, and that dealing with Malaviya's use of statistics. Contrary to Malaviya's assertion that the basic cause of the stagnation of primary education in the NWP&O lay in the exclusive use of the Persian script in government courts and offices, the progress of primary education, the Association pointed out, depended on far more complex factors and faced a number of non-linguistic obstacles. The great bulk of the population earned a living through agriculture and hence had little appreciation of education. The people of the province, particularly the literary castes, looked upon mass education as something unprecedented and unnecessary. Moreover, numerous castes and sects using different languages existed, the strict purdah system prevented females from taking advantage of educational opportunities, and the lack of religious instruction in government schools offended many who looked to education to provide religious training. Further, the facilities for primary education in the NWP&O lagged behind those in other provinces. Educated parents who desired more than primary education for their children considered the instruction in elementary arithmetic and the Hindi alphabet provided by Hindi primary schools a waste of time. Hence the great majority of students reaching the secondary level took Urdu or Persian as their second language. Finally, even the United Kingdom needed laws to enforce mass education; how much more

difficult to promote this in India where such a scheme was something 'quite foreign'.¹³⁸

The Association then turned to Malaviya's use of statistics; he had cited figures for the Punjab and the NWP&O purporting to show that primary education among the Muslims was languishing, and had attributed this to the use of the Persian script in the courts.¹³⁹ In reality, countered the Association, the low figures for Muslim primary education showed that the village schools which furnished Hindi training did little to fulfil the educational aims of Muslims, who consequently made private arrangements for elementary education. In another section of his work Malaviya had quoted figures showing that the number of pupils in the primary schools of the NWP&O had dropped continuously from 1880-81 to 1895-96, claiming that this resulted from the neglect of Hindi and the patronage of Urdu.¹⁴⁰ During the previous decade, however, argued the Association, according to Malaviya's own figures, the number of pupils enrolled in primary schools had increased substantially—from 153,252 in 1870-71 to 204,512 in 1881-82. Obviously government patronage of Urdu had little to do with the state of primary education. Furthermore, the decline in enrolment after 1881 had nothing to do with the question of the official language or script. The annual report of the Educational Department (which the Association cited in considerable detail) showed that the decline had resulted from a variety of causes. These included stricter registration practices, the closure of many marginally successful schools, the introduction of new fees, the imposition of stricter standards of inspection, and widespread sickness in 1879-80.¹⁴¹

Perhaps the most significant part of the Association's assault on Malaviya's work lay in the undisguised contempt for Hindi and Nagari which emerged from time to time. Such stinging expressions as 'one can hardly come across a man with a Hindi education only to whom the epithet of an educated man could in any sense be applied', or 'the introduction of Nagri will degenerate and defile the Hindustani language', or 'the shifting vulgar speech used by the rude villagers is known as Hindi', showed the truculence of Muslim partisans of Urdu and boded ill for any hope of harmony between the opposing groups.¹⁴² The Association's book typified much of the Hindi-Urdu controversy: an intellectual edifice erected on an emotional foundation.

Epilogue

The jubilation of Hindi supporters over the April 1900 resolution reached heights of rhetoric in extolling the government hitherto unknown. One Hindi newspaper avowed that Sir Antony had earned immortal fame for himself by doing justice to the Nagari script. Another said that the Lieutenant-Governor's resolution had made his name a household word in the NWP&O, and reported that some enthusiasts had proposed establishing a memorial for him, while others had suggested placing a photograph of him in every house.¹⁴³

The euphoria soon dissipated as the leaders of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha discovered to their chagrin. Although donations of nearly Rs 600 from the Raja of Bhinga (a minor prince in the NWP&O) and the Maharaja of Rewah (a more important prince of the Central Provinces) allowed an agent to make two extensive tours of the province in 1900, during the next two years the Sabha received and spent little for the promotion of Nagari. While the agent visited almost every district, meeting with well-known lawyers, influential citizens and Hindi enthusiasts, and urging them to promote the use of the Nagari script, soon after his return the interest of those whom he had visited began to wane.¹⁴⁴

In 1903 the Sabha took a fresh approach. Abandoning any hope that the old class of lawyers and legal officials might be persuaded to change, and despairing of sufficient efforts from Hindi lovers, the Sabha decided to set about establishing a new class of legal officials trained to write Nagari. Each district in the province was to have two *muharrirs* (writers or scribes), one for the civil court, and one for the criminal court, who were to write complaints and other legal documents in Nagari without charge. Since the Sabha's finances did not permit the shouldering of so massive a burden, the district of Banaras alone would benefit at first. Should the experiment prove successful, the scheme could be extended to other districts.

By August 1903 the Sabha had managed to appoint a Nagari *muharrir* to the Banaras criminal court, who wrote nearly 900 petitions in the course of the next ten months. By the end of 1904, financed largely by another donation from the Raja of Bhinga, two more *muharrirs* joined the ranks, one in Fyzabad and the other in Bahraich, both districts of Oudh. The grand plan of two Nagari writers in each district never materialized; indeed the Sabha experienced great difficulty in even finding competent men, and still greater difficulty in employing them.¹⁴⁵ The Sabha's failure bore out the earlier statements of D. T. Roberts

about the lack of practised Nagari writers especially in the eastern districts of the province.¹⁴⁶

A similar lack of success attended efforts to create a legal dictionary in Hindi. First conceived in 1904, and intended to consist of simple words to replace the difficult Arabic and Persian legal terms currently in use, the dictionary did not appear until 1932. To replace the entrenched legal terminology proved no easier than to replace the equally entrenched Urdu script or the class of lawyers and officials which used them both.¹⁴⁷

The Sabha's most enduring contribution to the Hindi-Nagari movement took the form of another organization, the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan (Society for Hindi Literature), whose success eventually far overshadowed that of its older sister. The idea of an annual conference for writers, editors, publishers and other persons interested in the development of Hindi had received attention for some time in the Hindi press. In late 1910 the Sabha sponsored the first Hindi Sahitya Sammelan which met in Banaras with Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya serving as president.¹⁴⁸ Approximately three hundred delegates from several provinces attended along with more than forty editors of Hindi newspapers and journals. The Sammelan soon passed out of the Sabha's tenuous grip and came under the firm control of members in Allahabad, chief among whom were Malaviya and another prominent political leader, P. D. Tandon. Subsequently, several leaders of national stature became associated with the Sammelan, including Rajendra Prasad, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Mahatma Gandhi. The leadership of the Sabha, composed mainly of figures from the Hindi literary world and the Educational Department, and concentrated chiefly in Banaras, lacked the political experience and national status needed to guide the Sammelan, which soon became concerned with the promotion of Hindi as the national language of India.¹⁴⁹

The Sammelan's chief rival on the political front eventually became the Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu (Society for the Progress of Urdu) under the leadership of Maulvi Abdul Haq, who guided the organization from 1912 until his death in 1961 in Pakistan.¹⁵⁰ During the Anjuman's earlier decades, its activities displayed striking parallels to those of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha. After Haq managed to bring stability to the Anjuman's finances, starting with an annual grant from the Nizam of Hyderabad in 1914, he initiated a series of projects. In 1917 the Anjuman received a grant from the Nizam to prepare a dictionary of scientific and technical terms, nineteen years after the Sabha had begun its scientific dictionary. In 1921 the Anjuman's journal *Urdū* first appeared, twenty-five years

after the inauguration of the Sabha's *Nāgarī Prachārīnī Patrikā*. In the late 1920s Haq started a search for old Dakani manuscripts, nearly three decades after the beginning of the Sabha's search for old Hindi manuscripts.¹⁵¹

The parallels even extended to the lives of the dominant figure in each organization. In 1930 Haq retired from the principalship of an Aurangabad school and took a post as the head of the Department of Urdu in the Muslim University of Osmania in Hyderabad. Shyam Sundar Das had left the headmastership of a school in Lucknow in 1921 to accept the position of head of the Department of Hindi in Banaras Hindu University.¹⁵² Such remarkable likenesses suggest that both Hindi and Urdu supporters operated through parallel institutional structures though they opposed each others' aims, much like two people filling the same algebraic equation with two different sets of numbers. Leaders of two rival language elites, each strove to attach value to opposing linguistic symbols and to increase their differentiation from each other, and each aided the process of multi-symbol congruence to divide Hindus and Muslims into opposing nationalities.

NOTES

1. Shyam Sundar Das, *Merī Ātmakahānī* (Prayāg, 1957), pp. 20–1.
2. *Report of the Uttar Pradesh Language Committee* (August, 1962), p. 51. The NWP&O became the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh in 1902, and Uttar Pradesh in 1947.
3. The Government of India modified this resolution—apparently due to a confusion between language and script—to the effect that *Hindi*, not the Nagari script, was to have equal status with *Urdu*, not the Urdu script.
4. See for example: Paul R. Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India* (London, 1974), p. 132; Jyotirindra Das Gupta, *Language Conflict and National Development* (Berkeley, 1970), p. 105; Kerrin Dittmer, *Die Indischen Muslims und die Hindi-Urdu-Kontoverse in den United Provinces* (Wiesbaden, 1972), pp. 103–13.
5. See: Christopher R. King, *The Nagari Pracharini Sabha (Society for the Promotion of the Nagari Script and Language) of Benares 1893–1914: A Study in the Social and Political History of the Hindi Language*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1974, Chapters XV, XVI, and XVII.
6. Jürgen Lutt, *Hindu-Nationalismus in Uttar Pradesh 1867–1900* (Stuttgart, 1970), p. 41.
7. M. Garcin De Tassy, *La Langue et la Litterature Hindoustaniens de 1850 a 1869* (Paris, 1874), pp. 322–3. Also see the section of Chapter IV entitled 'Attitudes towards the Vernaculars'.

8. Jeffrey Price Perrill, *Punjab Orientalism: The Anjuman-i-Punjab and Punjab University, 1865–1888*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Missouri, 1976, pp. 360–1; Shan Muhammad, *Sir Syed Ahmad Khan: A Political Biography* (Meerut, 1969), pp. 208–9; *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1867–68, Appendix B, pp. 22–4.
9. Dittmer, *Die Indischen Muslims*, pp. 89–90; *NWP SVN*, 1868, p. 551; *Ibid.*, 1869, pp. 94, 125.
10. Oudh was not officially joined to the North-Western Provinces and Oudh until 1877, when the two became known as the North-Western Provinces and Oudh.
11. Dittmer, *Die Indischen Muslims*, p. 90. See also the *Pioneer* (Allahabad) of 20 November 1868, p. 7, for a letter to the editor from Sandel on the subject of 'The Dev Nagree as a Language of Our Courts'.
12. *NWP SVN*, 1869, p. 125.
13. One of the most difficult-to-read forms of the Persian and Urdu scripts was *Shikasta* (literally meaning broken writing), the cursive or running hand form of the script.
14. A typical example of this argument appears in the *Kavi Vachan Sudha* (Banaras) of 8 August 1873. See *NWP SVN*, 1873, p. 528.
15. Shiva Prasad, *Memorandum: Court Characters, in the Upper Provinces of India* (Banaras, 1868).
16. Dittmer, *Die Indischen Muslims*, p. 89; *NWP SVN* 1900, p. 162; *The Pioneer* (Allahabad), 24 March 1869, p. 5.
17. Prasad, *Memorandum*, p. 3.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 5–6. Emphasis mine.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
23. The Urdu and Persian scripts are nearly identical; the chief difference is several extra letters in Urdu to represent sounds in Khari Boli—e.g., retroflex consonants—with no equivalents in Persian.
24. Madan Mohan Malaviya, *Court Character and Primary Education in N.-W. P. and Oudh* (Allahabad, 1897), Appendix, pp. 74–5.
25. *Ibid.*
26. Sir George Abraham Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India* (Calcutta: 1903–1928), Volume IX, Part 1, pp. xiv, 49. Emphasis in original.
27. *The Pioneer* (Allahabad), 1 March 1869, p. 6; *NWP&O SVN*, 1900, p. 162; *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1873–74, Orders of Government, p. 16.
28. *The Calcutta Gazette*, 16 June 1880, pp. 502–3. Also see the section of Chapter III entitled 'The Nagari and Kaithi Scripts in Bihar'.
29. Report of the *Indian Education Commission* (Calcutta, 1883), pp. 630–1, 635–9, and Appendix C. In the Punjab, the Hunter Commission became the centre of a three-cornered controversy between Hindi (or Bhasha), Urdu and Punjabi (or Gurmukhi). Its report listed a total of 67,290 signatures in support of Hindi: at least 30,063 came from the western part of the NWP&O, 25,946 from the eastern, 6,392 from other provinces or princely states (including Gwalior, Central India, Rajputana and the Punjab), and 4,673 were untraceable. Interestingly, fewer than 3,000 signatures came from Oudh, all from Lucknow, and very few from Banaras.

30. *NWP&SVN*, 1882, p. 660, summarizing an article in the 2 October 1882 issue.
31. One example of continuing efforts appeared in the Hindi weekly *Bharat Jivan* (Banaras), 23 June 1884. The paper reported that some residents of Kanpur had sent a memorial to the Lieutenant-Governor with twenty-three statements attached. These statements dealt with several contentious issues: the large number of Hindi speakers, the small number of Urdu speakers, the problems of villagers in finding Urdu-knowing translators for government documents in Urdu, the use of Hindi by missionaries, the difficulty of Urdu, the faults of the Urdu script, the greater ease of learning the Nagari script, and the use of Nagari or its variants by both Hindu and Muslim merchants and *patwārīs* (village record keepers). The memorial closed with a request for Hindi and Devanagari in the courts.
32. In the Punjab, Urdu supporters displayed much greater vigour, collecting thousands of signatures and sending more than twenty memorials. In contrast, the Commission did not encounter any linguistic agitation at all in Madras, Bombay, Bengal and the Central Provinces. *Educ Comm Rpt*, pp. 632–9.
33. *Education Commission. Report by the North-Western Provinces and Oudh Provincial Committee; with Evidence Taken before the Committee, and Memorials Addressed to the Education Commission* (Calcutta, 1884), p. 421.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 422.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 479.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 543. See also Christopher R. King, 'Images of Virtue and Vice: The Hindi-Urdu Controversy in Two Nineteenth-century Hindi Plays', in Kenneth W. Jones, editor, *Religious Controversy in British India: Dialogues in South Asian Languages* (Albany, 1992) for a discussion of how Hindi supporters attached images of virtue and goodness to their language, and of vice and depravity to Urdu.
37. *Educ Comm Rpt NWP&O*, p. 400.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 462.
39. Though I know of no direct evidence of the numbers signing petitions in the pre-1882 campaigns, a hint of the scale of earlier efforts appeared in an 1871 Urdu newspaper. This reported a meeting of the Allahabad Institute the previous year which resulted in a petition being drawn up in favour of Hindi and sent to the Lieutenant-Governor of the NWP with 4,000 signatures. *NWP SVN*, 1871, p. 20.
40. *Bharat Jivan*, 24 March 1884, p. 1. Translation mine.
41. Ram Chandra Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya kā Itihās* (Kāśī, 1968), p. 462; *NWP&O SVN*, 1889, p. 284. See also Note 43.
42. *NWP&O SVN*, 1889, p. 284.
43. Pandit Gauri Datta, *Nāgarī aur Urdū kā Svāṅg*. (Meerut, n.d.).
44. Saraswat Brahmins, a north Indian caste, were known for their close ties to the merchant caste of Khattris. The author of the source from which these details come does not define 'Nagari' in this context, but Datta probably included both the Hindi language and the Nagari script in its meaning. Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya*, pp. 462–3.
45. Babu Ratna Chandra, *Hindī Urdū kā Nāṭak: Hindee versus Urdu* (Prayāg, 1890).

- The author was probably a Kayasth judging from his name and from the viewpoint expressed in his play.
46. Sohan Prasad, *Hindī aur Urdū kī Laṛāī* (Gorakhpur, 1886). See *Bharat Jivan* (Banaras) 6 July 1885, p. 3, and 30 November 1885, p. 6; and *NWP&O SVN*, 1885, pp. 434, 783, 784, 831, and 839. During the uproar, which lasted for several months, a number of Hindu organizations and Hindi newspapers became involved, including the *Hitkari* (Champaran, Bihar), the Hindu Samaj, and the Arya Samaj; all of them counselled moderation.
 47. Prasad's poem first appeared in 1885, and a second edition in 1886, Ratna Chandra's drama in 1890, and Datta's play some time between 1882 and 1900—for he mentions the Hunter Commission but makes no reference to the government resolution of 1900.
 48. In the usage of many Hindi writers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Nagari meant either the Hindi language or the Nagari script or both. Shri Ray Krishna Das, Interview, 12 April 1972, Banaras.
 49. Datta, *Nāgarī aur Urdū*, p. 11. Translation mine. *Begam* is a respectful title for a Muslim lady.
 50. Chandra, *Hindī Urdū kī Nāṭak*, p. 29. Translation mine.
 51. See Note 1.
 52. See Note 36.
 53. Datta, *Nāgarī aur Urdū*, p. 10. Translation mine.
 54. Chandra, *Hindī Urdū kī Nāṭak*, p. 17. Translation mine. *Devī*, literally goddess, is a respectful term of address for a Hindu woman.
 55. Prasad, *Hindī aur Urdū*, stanzas 280, 281. Translation mine.
 56. Chandra, *Hindī Urdū kī Nāṭak*, Act I, Scene 3.
 57. Prasad, *Hindī aur Urdū*, *passim*.
 58. *Ibid.*, stanza 405. Translation mine.
 59. *Saraswatī* (Allahabad), III, 11 (November 1902), p. 359. In this dialogue Urdu addresses Hindi very rudely, calling her an ill-favoured and ugly witch, and expresses amazement that even though she has supposedly died she is still alive. Hindi replies patiently, calling Urdu 'daughter' and asks what harm she has done that Urdu should attack her.
 60. *Educ Comm Rpt NWP&O*, p. 422.
 61. *Ibid.*, p. 418; *Bharat Jivan*, 13 July 1885, p. 1; *NWP&O SVN*, p. 960.
 62. *NWP&O SVN*, 1889, pp. 403–4; *Ibid.*, 1898, p. 641; *NPS 2nd Ann Rpt*, p. 8.
 63. B. J. Akkad, *Malaviyaji* (Bombay, 1948), Appendix, pp. 1–2; Lütt, *Hindu Nationalismus*, pp. 126–7; *NWP&O SVN*, 1884, pp. 285, 885; *Ibid.*, 1886, p. 60; *Ibid.*, 1889, pp. 251–2; *Ibid.*, 1893, p. 257; *NPS 11th Ann Rpt*, Membership List, Nos. 54, 89.
 64. Lakshminarayan Gupta, *Hindī Bhāṣā aur Sāhitya kī Ārya Samāj kī Den* (Lucknow, [1961]), pp. 25–7, 53–7, 87–93.
 65. *Educ Comm Rpt*, pp. 636–7.
 66. *NWP&O SVN*, 1882, p. 438. These figures tally with an entry in the *Report of the Indian Education Commission*, p. 636, for 1,435 signatures for a pro-Hindi memorial from Lucknow, though the organization sponsoring the memorial is not named. The Hindi monthly *Bharat Sudasha Pravartak* of Farukhabad

- reported in its May–June 1900 issue that during the 1882 Education Commission agitation, hundreds of Muslims, especially in the interior of Farukhabad district, had signed memorials for the introduction of Nagari! *NWP&O SVN*, 1900, p. 323. Such instances, if true, are difficult to explain.
67. Gupta, *Hindī Bhāṣā*, pp. 258–62.
 68. *United Provinces District Gazetteers*, XXVI (Benares, 1909), pp. 106–8; R. L. Singh, *Banaras: A Study in Urban Geography* (Banaras, 1955), pp. 3–4; A. L. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India*, revised edition (New York, 1963), p. 165; J. N. Farquhar, *An Outline of the Religious Literature of India* (Delhi, 1967), pp. 328–9, 331–4; Motichandra, *Kaśī kā Itihās* (Bombay, 1962), pp. 199–202, 216–19; George A. Grierson, *The Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustan* (Calcutta, 1889), pp. 108–9 and following; A. M. Monteath, ‘Note on the State of Education in India during 1865–66’, *SRGI Home Department*, No. LIV (Calcutta, 1867), p. 93; *Hindustan Review* (Allahabad), June 1903, p. 554; Diana Eck, *Banaras: City of Light* (New York, 1962), *passim*; *Benares State Administration Report*, 1911, pp. 1–2.
 69. *Ibid.*
 70. Queen’s Collegiate School was part of Queen’s College—the renamed Banaras Sanskrit College.
 71. *Kaśī-Nāgarīprachārīnī Sabhā kā Arddhśatābdī-Itihās* [*The History of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha’s First Half-Century*] (Kāśī, 1943), pp. 1–5.
 72. *Ibid.*, pp. v, 3. Saraswat Brahmans and Khatris had a special relationship. The former served the latter as priests, and would even accept food cooked by Khatris. William Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Province and Oudh*, Volume III (Calcutta, 1906), pp. 267–8.
 73. Shyam Sundar Das, *Merī Ātmakahānī* [*The Story of My Life*] (Prayāg, 1957), pp. 1–19, 43–4, 131–9, 183–8, 209, 253; Shri Devi Narayan Vakil, Interview, 16 March 1972, Banaras.
 74. *Arddhśatābdī-Itihās*, pp. v, 3; Das, *Merī Ātmakahānī*, p. 11.
 75. *Arddhśatābdī-Itihās*, pp. 5–6, chart facing p. 252; Das, *Merī Ātmakahānī*, pp. 21–2, 27, and Chapters 2, 3, and 6 *passim*; Ram Chandra Shukla, *Hindī Sāhitya kā Itihās* (Kāśī, 1968), p. 458; R. A. Dwivedi, *A Critical Survey of Hindi Literature* (Delhi, 1966), p. 162; *NPS 1st Ann Rpt*, p. 5; *NPS 11th Ann Rpt*, Membership List, Nos. 227, 313; *Bharat Jivan* (Banaras), 14 August 1893, p. 7; Shri Ray Krishna Das, Interviews, 6, 8, and 25 April 1972, Banaras.
 76. Since the caste background of 11 of the 84 members could not be determined, these figures may well be even higher. See King, *The Nagari Pracharini Sabha*, pp. 251–9, for a more detailed analysis.
 77. Ray Krishna Das, Interviews, 8 and 12 April 1972, Banaras.
 78. Das, *Ātmakahānī*, p. 25. Translation mine.
 79. See, for example, the membership lists in *NPS 5th Ann Rpt* and *NPS 6th Ann Rpt*.
 80. See King, *The Nagari Pracharini Sabha*, pp. 262–8, 445–50. The Sabha’s numbers did not reach the 1914 high-water mark until its 50th anniversary in 1943.
 81. For a more detailed discussion of the Sabha’s income and expenditures, see King, *The Nagari Pracharini Sabha*, pp. 273–82, 452–4, 459–61.

82. All figures and percentages have been calculated from *Kāṣī-Nāgarīpracārīnī Sabhā kā Vinīt Nivedan* (Kāṣī, 1923), pp. 15, 16, 19–23. See also King, *The Nagari Pracharini Sabha*, pp. 456–7.
83. So politically 'safe' was the Sabha considered by the provincial government, that according to an official of the organization, it was allowed to keep officially proscribed books in its library. Shri Shambhu Nath Bajpeyi, Interview, 3 April 1972, Banaras.
84. See King, *The Nagari Pracharini Sabha*, Chapters XV and XVIII for a more detailed account of these activities of the Sabha.
85. For a more extended discussion of this subject, see King, *The Nagari Pracharini Sabha*, Chapter 16, 'The Language Attitudes of the Sabha', pp. 306–21.
86. NPS 4th Annual Report, 10–12.
87. Das, *Merī Ātmakahānī*, 251–2. Translation mine.
88. NPS 1st Annual Report, 35–6, 40–1.
89. UP Educ Progs, May 1903, 31–2.
90. Das, *Merī Ātmakahānī*, p. 26; *Arddhśatābdī-Itihās*, pp. 118–19; NPS 2nd Ann Rpt, p. 5; Radha Kishen [Krishna] Das, 'An Abstract Report on the Nagari Pracharini Sabha' ([Banaras], 1900), India Office Library MSS. Eur. D. 641, p. 4.
91. NWP&O SVN, 1896, pp. 203–4, 369. Sir Antony took office on 6 November 1895 and served as Lieutenant-Governor until 14 November 1901.
92. Das, *Merī Ātmakahānī*, p. 30; NWP&O Gen Admin Progs, October, 1900, pp. 101–3.
93. Das, *Merī Ātmakahānī*, pp. 30, 39. Hindi supporters received encouragement at this time from Justice Knox of Allahabad, and behind-the-scenes aid from Dr George Grierson, author of the *Linguistic Survey of India*.
94. *Arddhśatābdī-Itihās*, pp. 119–20; *Nāgarīpracārīnī Sabhā Kāṣī ke Vigat 60 Varsō kā Sindhāvalokan* (Banāras, [1953?]), p. 93.
95. Madan Mohan Malaviya, *Court Character and Primary Education in N.-W. P. and Oudh* (Allahabad, 1897).
96. Akkad, *Malaviyaji*, p. 7, Appendix pp. 1–2; Lütt, *Hindu Nationalismus*, 148; Padmakanta Malaviya, editor, *Mālavīyājī: Jīvan Jhalakiyā* (Delhi, [1962]), *passim*; Nand Lal Singh, editor *Mahamana Malaviyaji Birth Centenary Commemoration Volume 25th December 1961* (Varanasi, [1961]), pp. 197–8; Sachchidananda Bhattacharya, *A Dictionary of Indian History* (New York, 1967), p. 575.
97. NPS 11th Ann Rpt, Membership List; NPS 21st Ann Rpt, Membership List; Das, *Merī Ātmakahānī*, p. 40.
98. See Note 13.
99. See Malaviya, *Court Character*, *passim*. See also King, *The Nagari Pracharini Sabha*, pp. 363–9 for a more extensive analysis.
100. As an example of these other social uses, in the mid-1870s a series of reports, discontinued after a few years, appeared in the annual Post Office report for the NWP&O. The 1875–76 report showed that the number of Hindi letters was more than 80% of the number of Urdu letters. NWP Gen Dept Progs, August 1876, pp. 27–35. Also see Table 5, Chapter II.
101. See Chapter I and the Glossary for an explanation of these terms.

102. *NPS 1st Ann Rpt*, pp. 1–3. See also Kiing, *The Nagari Pracharini Sabha*, Chapter XIV, especially pp. 316–20, and Chapter XV, especially pp. 328–37.
103. *NWP&O SVN*, 1899, p. 80.
104. See King, *The Nagari Pracharini Sabha*, pp. 377–83, 399–407, for a more detailed discussion of this point.
105. Das, *Merī Ātmakahānī*, pp. 25, 41–2; Charles H. Heimsath, *Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform* (Princeton, 1964), pp. 281–3; *NWP&O SVN*, 1899, p. 39; *Arddhśatābdī-Itihās*, pp. 129–30; *NPS 5th Ann Rpt*, p. 18; *NPS 6th Ann Rpt*, p. 17.
106. *Ibid.*
107. Documents outlining the whole process are contained in the *NWP&O Gen Admin Progs* for October 1900.
108. *Ibid.*, pp. 93–120.
109. *Ibid.*, p. 105.
110. *Ibid.*, emphasis mine.
111. Written comments of C. J. Lyall on a Minute Paper, subject Home Department Judicial Proceedings for June, 1900, *Judicial and Public Papers 1900*, 555 (21–71), India Office Library; C. J. Lyall, *A Sketch of the Hindustani Language* (Edinburgh, 1880). Emphasis *not* mine.
112. *NWP&O Gen Admin Progs*, October 1900, p. 117. Emphasis mine.
113. *Ibid.*, October 1900, p. 102.
114. *Ibid.*, October 1900, pp. 93, 94. The two members of the Board of Revenue present at the session which drafted this 16 August 1899 reply were J. J. D. Latouche, later Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, and D. T. Roberts, who had served as a Revenue Settlement Officer in the eastern district of Ballia. See D. T. Roberts, *Report on the Revision of Records of Part of Ballia District. 1812–1885 A. D.* (Allahabad, 1886).
115. *Ibid.*, October, 1900, p. 102.
116. See the section of Chapter III entitled 'The Kaithi Script'.
117. *NWP&O Gen Admin Progs*, October 1900, p. 95.
118. See the section of Chapter III entitled 'The Nagari Script in the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories'.
119. *NWP&OSVN*, 1898, p. 266; *Ibid.*, 1899, pp. 265, 671, 698; *Ibid.*, 1900, pp. 35, 47–8, 113, 168. The Urdu Defence Association authored an extensive reply to Malaviya's *Court Character and Primary Education in the N. -W. P. and Oudh* entitled *A Defence of the Urdu Language and Character* (Allahabad, 1900) which appeared not long after the April 1900 resolution of the Government of the NWP&O. The Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental Educational Conference was founded by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in 1886 to further educational development among Muslims. See Shan Muhammad, *Sir Syed Ahmed Khan: A Political Biography* (Meerut, 1969), pp. 83–4.
120. Hamid Ali Khan, *The Vernacular Controversy: An Account and Criticism of the Equalisation of Nagri and Urdu as the Character for the Court of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, under the Resolution No. 585 III–3430–68 of Sir A. P. MacDonnell, the Lieutenant-Governor, N. -W. P., and Chief Commissioner, Oudh, Dated 18th April 1900 (N.P., [1900])*, p. 12.

121. Ibid., p. 52.
122. Ibid., pp. 86–92, 101–5, 116–7; *NWP&O Gen Admin Progs*, October 1900, pp. 117–18. In regard to Muslim prospects for the public service, a correction to the third rule of the resolution, allowing one year for aspirants to government service to qualify in both Hindi and Urdu, did not appear until 26 June 1900, more than six weeks after the Aligarh meeting.
123. Khan, *Vernacular Controversy*, p. 99.
124. *NWP&O Gen Admin Progs*, October 1900, 105.
125. *The Report of the Nagari-Pracharini Sabha, Benares, from 1893–1902* (Banaras, 1902), p. 14.
126. *NWP&O Gen Admin Progs*, October 1900, pp. 111, 119, 122–4. See also King, *The Nagari Pracharini Sabha*, pp. 409–12 for a more thorough discussion of this investigation. For contemporary criticism of the investigation, see Khan, *Vernacular Controversy*, pp. 15–16.
127. Khan, *Vernacular Controversy*, p. 101; *Bharat Jivan* (Banaras), 6 and 27 August and 3 September 1900; *NWP&O SVN*, 1900, pp. 348, 435, 466, 544; Sayyed Hashmi Faridabadi, *Panja Sāla Tārīkh-e-Anjumān Taraqqī-e-Urdū* (Karachi, 1953), p. 11; Rafiq A. Zakaria, 'Foreword', *Glimpses of Urdu Literature*, N. S. Gorekar (Bombay, 1961), p. xxxiii.
128. *NWP&O SVN* 1900, pp. 434–5.
129. *Bharat Jivan* (Banaras), 3 September 1900; Faridabadi, *Panja Sāla Tārīkh*, pp. 13–20.
130. Zakaria, 'Foreword', p. xxxiii; *NWP&O SVN* 1900, pp. 348, 466, 544; *Bharat Jivan*, 6 and 27 August 1900.
131. *Bharat Jivan*, 26 November 1900; *NWP&O SVN*, 1901, pp. 124, 143; Ibid., 1902, 108–9; Zakaria, 'Foreword', pp. xxxiii–xxxiv; Mohammad Noman, *Muslim India (Rise and Growth of the All India Muslim League)*, (Allahabad, 1942), pp. 61–2.
132. *NWP&O SVN* 1900, p. 326.
133. Ibid., p. 361, citing the July 1900 issue of *Al Bashir*.
134. Ibid., pp. 239, 294–5; Zakaria, 'Foreword', xxviii–xxix; Khan, *Vernacular Controversy*, pp. 20–1, 42, 52, 64–5, 79, 105, 117, 123.
135. Khan, *Vernacular Controversy*, p. 64, quoting from the June 1900 issue.
136. M. Rahmat-Ullah, LL.B., *A Defence of the Urdu Language and Character. (Being a reply to the pamphlet called 'Court Character and Primary Education in N. -W. P. and Oudh')*, (Allahabad, 1900), p. 12.
137. Ibid.
138. Ibid., p. 62.
139. This line of argument, if applied to the Nagari script, would vitiate Malaviya's entire approach. No one seems to have noticed this contradiction, however.
140. Under the governments of Sir John Strachey and Sir George Couper (1874–82), Malaviya had stated, this patronage had reached a high point with the rules of 1877 requiring Persian or Urdu as a second language for aspirants to government service. See the section of Chapter IV entitled 'The Relationship of Education and Employment'.
141. Rahmat-Ullah, *Defence of Urdu*, pp. 71–7.

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142. Ibid., pp. 34, 64, 68.
143. *NWP&O SVN* 1900, pp. 220, 348.
144. *Arddhśatābdī-Itihās*, p. 136; *NPS 8th Ann Rpt*, pp. 14–15.
145. *NPS 10th Ann Rpt*, pp. 24, 25; *NPS 11th Ann Rpt*, pp. 11, 29.
146. See the section of this chapter entitled 'The 1900 Decision: The Machinery of Deliberation'.
147. *NPS 11th Ann Rpt*, p. 2; *Arddhśatābdī-Itihās*, pp. 138, 202.
148. *A Short History of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha Benares City. (July 1893 to June 1915)* (Banaras, [1915?]), pp. 42–3; *Arddhśatābdī-Itihās*, 219–220. Jyotirindra Das Gupta in *Language Conflict and National Development* (Bombay, 1970), p. 113, states that the first Sammelan was held in Allahabad, certainly an error. As the annual *Kārya Vivaraṇs* [Reports of Activities] of the Sammelan show, the first Sammelan was held in Banaras, the second in Allahabad. Kerrin Dittmer in her *Die Indischen Muslims and die Hindi-Urdu Controverse in Den United Provinces* (Wiesbaden, 1972), pp. 148–9, notes that the Sabha's claim to have originated the Sammelan has been disputed by the leaders of the latter.
149. *Arddhśatābdī-Itihās*, pp. 220–1; Das Gupta, *Language Conflict*, pp. 112–14, 118–19; Nand Lal Singh, editor, *Mahatma Malaviyaji Birth Centenary Commemoration Volume 25th December 1961* (Varanasi, [1961?]), unnumbered pages immediately following table of contents.
150. Faridabadi, *Panja Sāla Tārīkh*, pp. 16, 20–1, 28, 32–6, 41, 44–4, 48–50, 52–3.
151. Ibid.
152. Ibid. Das, *Merī Ātmakahānī*, pp. 183–8, 209, 253.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

Urdu: Hey you old witch! In spite of having died, you're still alive?

Hindi: Daughter! Why have you tried to kill me for so long? What harm have I ever done to you?¹

Introduction

The words above come from Radha Krishna Das, official of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras, relative of Bharatendu Harishchandra, and an ardent supporter of Hindi. They appear in the November 1902 issue of *Saraswatī*, one of the leading literary journals of the Hindi world, as an accompaniment to a striking picture. Urdu, personified as a Muslim courtesan, stands on the left, right hand resting on her hip, left hand stretched out towards her rival, while Hindi, personified as a Hindu wife, sits demurely on the right, left hand placed on her thigh, right hand supporting her chin. The postures and the words suggest an arrogant and provocative Urdu taunting a long-suffering and patient Hindi.

They also hint at the intensity of the clash between the partisans of the two branches of Khari Boli in the UP: an intensity displayed in the exaggerated reactions to the 1900 Resolution, in the agitation which vitiated the language statistics for the 1901 census, and in many other ways; an intensity echoed less forcefully in the adjoining provinces of Bihar, the Punjab and the Central Provinces, and hardly at all in other areas. This intensity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century UP increasingly infected the Hindi movement on the national level, evidenced not only in the bitterness of the Hindi-Urdu struggle, but also in the resentment crystallized in the expression 'Hindi imperialism'² and widely felt in such diverse linguistic areas as Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. The divisiveness engendered and encouraged by the extremists on both sides in this process of linguistic differentiation formed part and parcel of the process of multi-symbol congruence. As Hindi became more and more closely identified with Hindu, and Urdu with Muslim, linguistic antagonism both reflected and affected religious antagonism in a vicious spiral of separatism which eventually led to the partition of British India into two countries and of Khari Boli into two distinct forms.³

Let us briefly retrace the steps which brought the situation to this pass, occasionally asking ourselves along the way what might have made things turn out differently. This admittedly speculative approach guarantees no certainty, but can bring us to focus on some key elements with relevance to the contemporary linguistic state of affairs. For while nineteenth century North India may seem very far away, many of the same components of linguistic contention exist today, e.g., generally the same low opinion of vernacular languages—only this time in comparison with English, the same tendencies to identify certain languages and scripts with certain social and religious groups, the same inconsistent and sometimes contradictory government policies adding to the confusion, the same extremist urges to ‘purify’ Hindi of foreign words, the same penchant to talk of the welfare of the masses in terms convenient to one’s own interests, the same proclivity to ignore the language habits of the masses of people in an attempt to communicate in ‘*shuddh*’ Hindi. In short, while history hardly repeats itself, continuities have long life-spans: people transmit attitudes; books perpetuate styles, vocabularies, and scripts; languages in their more basic aspects change slowly. Yesterdays affect today. The ‘Hindi imperialism’ of twentieth century India has descended from the Hindi-Urdu controversy of nineteenth century UP.

I personally encountered this nineteenth century heritage many years ago as a student living in Birla Hostel in Banaras Hindu University. Some of my fellow students introduced me to a young man visiting from Agra who made a point of informing me that he spoke only *shuddh* Hindi. A few moments later he used the Arabic-derived word *tārīkh* meaning ‘date’. When I twitted him on not having used a ‘purer’ equivalent such as *dinānk* or *tithi* he could only splutter angrily.⁴ For me, this experience has come to epitomize the artificiality of all attempts to ‘purify’ languages of words originating from some forbidden source, no matter how thoroughly these words may already be imbedded in the language, or no matter how much they might enrich a literary and linguistic heritage.

I find the closely associated practice of artificially manufacturing unknown and sometimes enormous words—Dr Raghuvira’s infamous *agnirathvirāmsthān* for railroad station or *agnirathchalnāchalanniyan-tranpattikā* for railroad signal, for example—from classical sources to replace widely-used words equally pernicious, whether carried out by either Hindi or Urdu extremists. Part of the reasoning behind such practices seems to be the belief that the vernaculars (Hindi and Urdu)

are imperfect or corrupted versions of the classical languages (Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian), or at least quite inferior vehicles which require to be enriched from superior sources. Some students of the classical languages even go so far as to say that one cannot speak good Hindi without knowing Sanskrit, or good Urdu without knowing Persian and Arabic. This strikes me as akin to saying that one cannot speak good English without knowing Greek and Latin, an attitude formerly prevalent in English-speaking countries but now practically extinct, and an attitude with little or no evidence to support it.

Far more noxious than these attitudes, however, is the fervent, almost fanatic identification of language, script, and religion, and the resulting need to 'purify' or 'cleanse' a language from any foreign and corrupting taint. There is no reason that good Hindus cannot learn Urdu in the Urdu script or good Muslims Hindi in the Nagari script. Moreover, Hindi can be written in the Urdu script (with minor losses from the viewpoint of spelling and pronunciation)' and Urdu can be written in the Nagari script (again with minor losses).⁶ Both forms of Khari Boli can also be written in the Roman script' just as English can be written in either the Nagari or Urdu script.⁸ Behind this sort of 'vocabulary cleansing' lie attitudes of intolerance and bigotry which bear a resemblance to those behind the 'ethnic cleansing' now occurring in the former Yugoslavia. These attitudes have in common the rejection of cultural and religious differences, while to me the acceptance of differences is the heart of that tolerance which must necessarily underlie the modern secular state, the unity in diversity to which many in India aspire.

As an outsider acquainted with both forms of Khari Boli and appreciative of the beauties of both, I would plead for an approach which cherishes both the differences as well as the similarities in the two traditions. We might call the latter 'Hindi-Urdu', 'Urdu-Hindi', 'Hirdu', 'Urdu', 'Hindustani', or 'Hindi', but whatever the name, what is shared by Hindi and Urdu has become the true national link language, the language best known through 'Hindi' films which are popular all over India and in many places abroad.'

As we have seen, Amrit Rai documents one off-flow from the mainstream which resulted in a highly Persianized Urdu. I have attempted to document a second off-flow which resulted in a highly Sanskritized Hindi. By the mainstream I mean the national link language, Hindi-Urdu. All three streams—Hindi-Urdu, Persianized Urdu, and Sanskritized Hindi—have their place, but the latter two have no business trying to be the national link language. To me, at least, that

approach seems most desirable which not only avoids any forced assimilation to either form of Khari Boli, but also shuns any forced or artificial differentiation of either form from the other.

I would also plead for the equal treatment of both scripts on the state level—throughout the Hindi area—for both educational and official purposes on a *permissive* basis. No solution which would attempt to eliminate either script, or to substitute some other script (such as the Roman) could ever do justice to the linguistic and cultural heritage of Khari Boli. Whether the political will to do so can be mustered and maintained is quite another question, although the 1989 decision of the government of Uttar Pradesh to recognize Urdu as an additional official language seems a hopeful sign.

Assimilation and Differentiation

From one angle, we can look at the whole history of the Hindi movement as a deliberate attempt to increase differentiation (to make Hindi more and more different from Urdu) and to reduce assimilation (to discourage Hindus from any attachment to Urdu), while the countervailing Urdu movement strove to accomplish the opposite. Amrit Rai argues compellingly that extensive differentiation took place in the first half of the eighteenth century when Muslim courtiers deliberately introduced extensive vocabulary changes in a hitherto joint Hindu-Muslim language, Hindi/Hindavi, giving rise to a highly Persianized Urdu.¹⁰ His picture, however, emphasizes one side of the divide between Hindi and Urdu, and since he focuses on the pre-nineteenth century situation he understandably gives much less attention to later developments.

I would argue that subsequently many Hindus, especially Kayasths and Kashmiri Brahmans, not only accepted but also mastered Khari Boli's new form, Persianized Urdu, thus partly bridging the divide envisioned by Rai. They assimilated to a more Islamicized version of Khari Boli without feeling they had compromised themselves as Hindus. Let us remember the following: the various authors, Hindu and Muslim, associated with Fort William who wrote in both Hindi and Urdu, and used words from several different linguistic sources; the large number of Hindus who studied in indigenous Persian schools in the 1840s and beyond; the students of Dr Ballantyne in 1847 who saw nothing to regret in the eventual merging of Hindi with Urdu; the Hindu students who opted for Urdu in the Anglo-Vernacular and Vernacular Middle Examinations in the 1880s and 1890s; the sizeable

proportion of Hindus in government service familiar with Urdu; the complaints in vernacular literature against Urdu-loving Hindus; the severe criticism of Kayasths and Kashmiri Brahmans in the autobiography of Shyam Sundar Das; and the most popular Hindi authors of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Devki Nandan Khatri and Prem Chand, the first of whom although writing in the Nagari script used a language style close to Urdu, and the second of whom started as an Urdu writer before becoming a Hindi writer.

The other side of the divide came with the beginning of the Hindi movement in the 1860s when some Hindus began to assert that one could no longer be a good Hindu and an advocate of Urdu at the same time. This movement made deliberate changes in Khari Boli which eventually resulted in a highly Sanskritized Hindi. The split in the common trunk of Hindi and Urdu, Khari Boli, which began with the growth of one major branch, Persianized Urdu, now continued with the growth of another major branch, Sanskritized Hindi. The process of multi-symbol congruence now commenced in earnest and culminated in slogans such as 'Hindi, Hindu, Hindustan' whose creators saw no room for non-Hindi speakers and non-Hindus in Hindustan. We might go so far as to call this process the 'Sanskritization of Urdu' or at least the 'Sanskritization of Khari Boli'.

Yet throughout the history of the Hindi movement before independence the equation Hindi = Hindu was never true.¹¹ In the first place, the rural masses of the population, those less mobilized, remained relatively uninvolved in the struggle between Hindi and Urdu which was a major concern of the more urban vernacular-educated elite. The bulk of the population continued to use the regional standards and in many cases the Kaithi script. Petitions and memorials to government in favour of Hindi or Nagari received tens of thousands of signatures at best from among a population of many millions. Moreover, some evidence indicates that on the popular level during our period Hindu and Muslim saints had long been revered by Hindu and Muslim alike. This suggests the possibility of a religious accommodation or even synthesis hardly favourable to the creation of opposing congruences of language and religion.

In the second place, even among educated Hindus, besides those wedded to Urdu, many preferred Braj Bhasha to Khari Boli as the language of poetry, and others adopted the Kaithi script rather than the Nagari, especially in Bihar. Moreover, the tradition of classical Hindustani music was patronized by educated Hindus and Muslims alike,

suggesting a cultural synthesis on the elite level paralleling that on the mass level. In sum, the Hindi movement in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries represented a vernacular elite with a vested interest in government service. This elite, only a fraction of educated Hindus, and a tiny fraction of all Hindus, explicitly rejected the linguistic and religious syntheses possible and attempted with limited success to impose its linguistic-religious vision on all Hindus. With the advent of independence, however, the Hindi movement did make significant gains, though unable to triumph completely, and therefore we must of necessity look at the roots of differentiation from which it grew.

No one can question that all the elements for the diverging of Hindi and Urdu, and their blending into opposing Hindu and Muslim systems of multi-symbol congruence existed at least as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century. On the linguistic level, we have the apparently unbridgeable differences between the Nagari and the Urdu scripts, and Gilchrist's vivid testimony on the tendency of some of his colleagues to deliberately introduce Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian words into their writings. On the communal level we have the all-too-frequently described *socia'*, cultural, and religious differences between Hindus and Muslims. In looking back, the process by which language and religion became identified with each other seems inevitable.

Of all the potential elements of linguistic differentiation, the most intractable seems to have been script. One can speak of a grammatical continuum between Hindi and Urdu: they share much and differ little here. One can also speak of a lexical continuum: they have a common core and differ as much or as little beyond this as a particular writer may wish. But no script continuum exists between them; no real blending of the Nagari and Urdu scripts can be achieved. This fact more than any other has led to the no-compromise and either/or attitudes so characteristic of the entire Hindi-Urdu controversy.

The difference between the two scripts seemed so important to some partisans that they confused script and language, as Grierson noted, saying that something written in Nagari had to be Hindi, the language of Hindus, and something in Persian script Urdu, the language of Muslims.¹² Both sides rejected the possible compromise of the Roman script; both rejected another possible solution, suggested by Gandhi, of using both scripts together. Those caught between the extremes, the many Hindus who valued Urdu (and the few Muslims who valued Hindi) found themselves on the defensive.

Earlier we noted the apparent contradictions in the writing style and

language pronouncements of Raja Shiva Prasad. Among his writings one can find not only statements opposing the forcible introduction of Sanskrit words and but also statements opposing the influence of Urdu and Persian. Among his publications one can also find both Persianized Urdu and Sanskritized Hindi, both the Urdu script and the Nagari script. Had Shiva Prasad lived at the time of Fort William College, the 'contradictions' in his writing style would have posed no problem. We may consider the possibility that his contradictory behaviour represented his response to an equally contradictory situation.

The Hindi movement forgave Shiva Prasad for his pro-Urdu tendencies because he also worked hard to promote the Nagari script. Other Hindus who valued Urdu, however, came in for harsher criticism. One common assumption among Hindi advocates seemed to be that such Hindus clung to Urdu for economic motives, i.e., that their knowledge of the Urdu script and language gave them an advantage in the competition for government service which they had no intention of relinquishing, however much their Hindu consciences may have pinched them for their linguistic apostasy. Such an assumption clearly appears in the verses of Sohan Prasad of Gorakhpur quoted earlier which attempt to explain the motives of Urdu-loving Hindus:

He thinks in his heart of hearts: now nothing but lies from me,
For if I speak against Urdu, out the window my service will be.
If Hindi enters my office, through begging my living I'll earn,
For we know nothing of Hindi—at home it's Urdu we learn."

This conventional explanation, however, overlooks the possibility that Kayasths and other Urdu-knowing Hindus represented the continuity of an earlier tradition, epitomized by the writers of Fort William College and the students of Banaras Sanskrit College under Ballantyne, when one's religious background had no necessary relationship to the language one used in writing or speaking, and when a different cultural tradition could be cherished for its own sake without fear of accusations by fellow Hindus or Muslims.

All this suggests that a major reason for the Hindi movement was the existence of Urdu. In Brass's terms, the existence of another different or potentially different group, especially if this other group is perceived to be benefiting more from social change, stimulates the development of group consciousness. The Urdu vernacular elite mobilized earlier than the Hindi elite, and was seen to be prospering beyond its deserts. Eventually the Hindi elite drew even and surpassed its rival, partly through the sheer strength of numbers as more and more of the underlying

Hindu majority was mobilized into the Hindi movement especially through the educational system.

This process of increasing mobilization of the Hindu majority, outstripping the pace of assimilation to Hindu-Muslim synthesis represented by Urdu, appeared in the statistics of publishing. In the realm of publishing, as we have seen, due at least in part to large numbers of educational texts indicating large numbers of Hindus being educated in Hindi, Hindi began to outstrip Urdu around the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century.¹⁴ The remarkable expansion of Sanskrit-Hindi works is of particular interest, suggesting perhaps another form of the Sanskritization of Khari Boli through popularizing religious works and hence further reinforcing the already strong association between script, vocabulary and religion. In the realm of journalism, however, Urdu retained a lead well past the time when its rough equality with Hindi in publishing had disappeared. In short, eventually greater numbers told, but during the period of British rule this was not allowed to happen. The fact that Urdu remained dominant in the courts and offices of the UP, and that many Hindus continued to support Urdu, exacerbated and prolonged the struggle.

One of the most interesting aspects of the long-drawn-out struggle to differentiate Hindi from Urdu appeared in the regional patterns of education, publishing and membership in voluntary language organizations. Government education statistics beginning with those gathered by Fink in 1845 showed consistent patterns in the regional and social distribution of language learning. Strikingly similar patterns appeared in publishing statistics and in the membership statistics of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha. All three sources suggest that the strongholds of Sanskritized Hindi lay in the eastern part of the province, while those of Urdu lay in Oudh and the west. The education and membership statistics further indicate the strong association of certain higher Hindu caste groups with Hindi and others with Urdu, and the virtual exclusion of lower caste groups from education. Finally, the publishing statistics show two things: first, that powerful associations between certain languages and certain cities existed—Arabic, Persian and Urdu with Lucknow, and Hindi and Sanskrit with Banaras and Allahabad; and second, that by the 1920s Hindi not only outstripped Urdu, but also began to dominate regions previously dominated by Urdu. Perhaps we can say that at *this* point the eventual triumph of Hindi began in earnest. In any case, the evidence points to a process by which greater assimilation to Sanskritized Hindi and differentiation from

Urdu began in the eastern part of the province, and eventually spread to the west.

We would do well to accept this picture only tentatively, however, since contemporary sources often do not make clear the exact nature of the language taught or published. For example, the publishing statistics do not tell us on what basis the language of a book is designated Hindi or Urdu. If, as I suspect, the usual basis was the script, then the triumph of Hindi may have been a little less overwhelming. Some contemporary evidence suggests that publications in the Nagari script could be well towards the Urdu end of the lexical continuum. Although the courts of the Central Provinces had used the Nagari script for years, noted one observer in 1900, the language was just as Persianized as it was in the NWP&O where the Urdu script was used. Furthermore, the most popular works of literature in 'Hindi' in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were those of Devki Nandan Khatri, who used a Persianized language written in the Nagari script. On the other hand, as the wrangles over the proper language for elementary and secondary school texts in the UP made clear, there is little doubt that many Hindi works in this category—published in very large numbers—used a highly Sanskritized language. In short, the evidence is somewhat ambiguous. Of one thing we can be certain, however: in the UP and elsewhere in north India, the Nagari script overwhelmed the Urdu script in the realm of publishing early in the twentieth century.

At this point it seems useful to ask ourselves why the Nagari Pracharini Sabha (and other organizations and individuals promoting Hindi) did not turn to already existing popular scripts and language styles to promote the cause of Hindi. Why did the Sabha reject the Kaithi script, especially when Nagari writers for the courts proved so difficult to find while Kaithi writers were plentiful?¹⁵ Why did it ignore the works of Devki Nandan Khatri and other popular authors, even when written in the Nagari script?¹⁶ The answer, I think, hinted at earlier, lies in the process of Sanskritization, a process which can be looked at in two different ways.

First, as suggested above, the process of Sanskritization served to differentiate Hindi from Urdu. Here the importance of *shuddh* or purity implied by Sanskritization is vis-a-vis Urdu. Hindi must become *shuddh* through the elimination of Persian and Arabic words and their replacement with Sanskrit words, and in doing so Hindi becomes different from Urdu. Nagari is more *shuddh* than Kaithi because it has no associations with Hindustani or Urdu as Kaithi does. (There seems

to exist a similar tendency among Urdu speakers as implied by the expression *sāf Urdū*.) This way of looking at the process requires the existence of Urdu as a foil, a counter-example, something from which to differentiate Hindi.

But there is a second and rather different way of looking at the process of Sanskritization. From this angle, Sanskritization is an ancient process which requires no foil or counter-example, which is not necessarily anti-Urdu or anti-Muslim, but rather recognizes the imperfection of other languages vis-a-vis Sanskrit itself, a model whose very name means 'perfected'. In ancient Sanskrit plays the moral and social status of various characters is partly indicated by the sort of language they speak; lower classes speak Prakrit or other more vernacular forms, while the upper classes, the more proper or noble characters, speak Sanskrit. From this angle there is a hierarchy of languages much like the social hierarchy. Just as one lifts one's social status by imitating the higher castes, particularly Brahmans (who know Sanskrit best), so does one lift the status of a language by imitating the Brahman of languages, Sanskrit.

Bengali, which had a powerful influence on Hindi during our period, had become highly Sanskritized. Yet Bengali had no need for a counter-example in the form of a Persianized Bengali written in the Persian script, used in the provincial courts and offices, and cherished by a large class of Hindus. And while Bengalis played an important and neglected role in promoting Hindi in the Nagari script for both economic reasons (since the official adoption of Sanskritized Hindi in the Nagari script would have given Bengalis seeking employment outside their home province an advantage) and cultural reasons (Sanskritization promoted a common Hindu heritage) during our period, this was mostly carried on outside Bengal. Within Bengal the Sanskritization of Bengali proceeded without the anti-Muslim attitudes which accompanied the Sanskritization of Hindi in the UP. Similarly, both Marathi and Gujarati became Sanskritized without any campaign of 'purification' from Arabic or Persian words. In short, the Sanskritization of Hindi would have occurred with or without Urdu; the existence of Urdu simply intensified and lent communal overtones to a process that would have occurred anyway. We can look on the Sanskritization of Hindi as the forging of an acceptable symbol for the process of multi-symbol congruence, or we can see it as an ancient and inevitable tendency among almost all Indian languages and having no necessary connection with communal politics.

Virtue and Vice: The Manipulation of Symbols

The process of Sanskritization was one way in which Hindi supporters attached value to their linguistic symbol. In a similar way, Urdu supporters attached value to their symbol through the parallel processes of Persianization and Arabicization. As suggested above, these processes could occur without a potential rival on the horizon. Another major method of increasing the value of one's chosen symbol, however, required a visible opponent. This method, which occurred over and over again throughout the course of the controversy, involved affixing labels of virtue or vice to one or the other of the two rivals. Tables 14 and 15 below summarize the most frequently-occurring of these labels, many of which we have already encountered.

One of the most striking things implicit in these tables is the close relationship between technical and 'moral' aspects, i.e., technical defects lead to moral or aesthetic failings. From the Hindi viewpoint, because the Urdu script was unscientific, illegible, hard to learn, and capable of rendering several readings for one word, therefore it easily led to fraud and corruption. Because Urdu had a foreign script and a foreign and profane vocabulary therefore it was impure. And because the Nagari script was scientific, legible, easy to learn, and only gave one meaning for one word, therefore it encouraged honesty and truthfulness. And because Nagari was indigenous and had an indigenous and sacred vocabulary, therefore it was pure. Similar, though not identical, statements could be made from the Urdu viewpoint.

Another obvious characteristic is the refusal to admit any weaknesses in one's chosen symbol. One cannot have a blemished symbol—it must be perfect or at least presented as perfect. Weaknesses are only implicitly admitted: thus the Urdu Defence Association claimed that the Urdu script was actually quite easy to learn and that forgery was possible in any script; the NPS more than once demonstrated to British officials the speed with which Nagari could be written, and boasted of the antiquity and volume of Hindi literature.

The flavour of the Hindi-Urdu controversy and of the vernacular literature through which it found partial expression reminds one of medieval European morality plays in which everybody knows who is good and who is bad, and no real debate takes place. We have only foregone conclusions instead of the to-and-fro of arguments, duologues instead of dialogues, positions taken and then 'facts' marshalled to suit them instead of reasoned discourse, and yes/no or right/wrong thinking

TABLE 14
Labels of Virtue and Vice for Hindi and Urdu:
Hindi Viewpoint*

Virtue	Vice
Indigenous	Foreign
Pure	Impure
Legible	Illegible
Fraud difficult	Fraud easy
Easy to learn	Hard to learn
Golden past	Decadent present
One word = one meaning	One word = many meanings
Many speakers	Few speakers
Scientific alphabet	Unscientific

* Both language and script are included in the list above.

TABLE 15
Labels of Virtue and Vice for Urdu and Hindi:
Urdu Viewpoint*

Virtue	Vice
Refined	Crude
Pure	Impure
Legible	Illegible
Fraud difficult	Fraud easy
Much literature	Little literature
Quick to write	Slow to write
Living language	Dead language
Best people use	Yokels use

* Both language and script are included in the list above.

instead of relative thinking; in short, all the earmarks of polemical literature.

In all of these processes voluntary organizations played an important role. When we examine the histories of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha and the Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu we discover that each organization made major efforts to attach value to its respective symbol. Each sought out old manuscripts to publish, each founded scholarly journals, each produced standard dictionaries, each created scientific terminologies,

and the most important leaders of each had strikingly similar careers in education and scholarship. This uncanny series of parallels between the activities of the two organizations suggests an underlying logic of affixing value to and standardizing a symbol. It also suggests that part of the process of standardization involved an English language model. In the attitudes of many Indians, just as the vernaculars ranked below the classical languages in respect of purity and refinement, so they fell below English in respect of modernity and literary and scientific development; such attitudes are alive and well in India even today.

The chief role of voluntary organizations such as the NPS, the HSS, and the ATU, however, was to *differentiate* their respective symbols from those of their rival. The gradual institutionalizing of this process was an important achievement for the Hindi movement and marked the beginning of a partial transition from 'community' to 'nation' in terms of our theory. The efforts of the NPS embodied what was considered important by those Hindus trying to impress their view of Hindi on other Hindus, and many of the Sabha's activities indicated an implicitly exclusionist view towards Muslim culture. The Sabha and other organizations like it were bent on increasing differentiation. Any assimilation meant assimilation of Muslims to the Hindi tradition, and any suggestion of assimilation to the Urdu tradition was vigorously rejected.

The Ambiguous Role of Government

As Paul Brass points out, both political organizations and government policy often play decisive roles in shaping inter-group relations and group consciousness. As we have seen, British language policy in the UP and elsewhere showed contradictions, inconsistencies and confusion, which more often than not encouraged the differentiation between Hindi and Urdu. For some, especially Indian, writers it seems *de rigueur* to explain any British policy that recognized differences as an instance of 'divide and rule'. While such explanations have some merit, they overlook the sheer muddleheadedness of a great deal of policy. Are we to explain the confusion of language and script evident in the pronouncements of the Government of India concerning the resolution of 1900 as an example of a sinister conspiracy? Are we to attribute MacDonnell's rapidly changing views of the currency of spoken Hindi to deep-laid scheming? Must we consider the efforts of Shore in the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories for the Nagari script, and the labours of Nesfield in Oudh for the Kaithi script part of a plot to pit Indians against each other? Or can we rather consider all of these as examples

of confused thinking, uncoordinated local initiative and conflicting perceptions, all in response to a vast, complex and often ill-known situation?

In any case, we have seen clear evidence of a fundamental contradiction in British language policy in the UP, namely, the encouragement of Hindi in education along with the preferment of Urdu in administration. To put matters differently, language policy accomplished the following: helped to create a flood of Hindi textbooks in the Nagari script and a class of people with a vested interest in Sanskritizing them; exposed tens of thousands of students to a Hindi-medium education using these textbooks; and then denied these students equal access to the very government positions for which they had gone to school in the first place. This glaring inconsistency found no parallel outside the UP, and did much to increase the differentiation between the two forms of Khari Boli. The resolution of 1900, supposedly rectifying this contradiction, only added to the intensity of the controversy. The confused thinking of the government exacerbated the situation; the 'new' rules excited both sides and stirred up communal feeling, without making any real changes.

The actions of government strike the modern observer (with the benefit of hindsight) as close to ludicrous. By sponsoring Hindi in Nagari at the elementary and secondary school levels, the government helped to create the very differences between Hindi and Urdu that many British officers decried. The government created, or at least fed, the genie in the bottle and then found itself surprised when the genie tried to get out. The clearest evidence of the results of this almost perverse policy appeared in the proceedings of the various educational bodies attempting to find a common language for school readers. The previous policies of government had helped to increase the very tendencies that it now strove to diminish. Previous partiality vitiated later attempts at impartiality.

One can also exaggerate the power of government. Although the Muslim reaction to the 1900 resolution suggested that a momentous shift in policy had occurred, the actual results were paltry and little real change took place in the language of the courts and offices, especially in the western UP, until independence. The success of Hindi supporters, brought about by a temporarily favourable constellation of forces (the Lieutenant-Governorship of MacDonnell, the influence of Grierson and Knox, the exertions of the NPS, the efforts of Malaviya, the failure of Muslims to take yet another Hindi campaign seriously, and the death

of Syed Ahmed Khan in 1898) resulted in a psychologically significant but otherwise meaningless victory. Even in the Central Provinces and Bihar, where the Muslim population was either less numerous or less influential than in the UP, and where the government decreed the exclusive rather than permissive use of the Nagari script, any significant change took decades.

The competition of educated Hindus and Muslims for government service, more acute in the UP than anywhere else, brought a passionate intensity into the struggle between Hindi and Urdu. And it was in just this arena that government policy, by clearly favouring Urdu, did the most to heighten the perception of uneven rates of social change by Hindi-educated Hindus and increase the differentiation of Hindi and Urdu. Whatever the origins of the usual British preference for Urdu,¹⁷ the result was to render vain any efforts to diminish the ever-increasing differentiation between Hindi and Urdu.

Perhaps the most visible symbol of the failure of British language policy in the UP was the appearance in 1927 of the Hindustani Academy of Allahabad, sponsored by the provincial government. If the Sabha embodied the equation Hindi = Hindu, and the Anjuman the equation Urdu = Muslim, then this new organization represented the more ambiguous equation Hindi + Urdu = Hindu + Muslim. Like another British attempt to reduce differentiation—the proposed common language for elementary and secondary school texts—this too had little effect on the widening gulf between Hindi and Urdu.

What If?: Concluding Speculations

As noted above, in other areas of North India—present-day Maharashtra, Gujarat and Bengal—no Persianized form of the vernacular written in the Persian script took root. That is, no parallels to Urdu existed in Marathi-, Gujarati- or Bengali-speaking areas. Here, unlike the UP, language did not have the same importance as part of the process of multi-symbol congruence in the formation of Hindu and Muslim nationalism. Hence we find little or no evidence of movements to 'purify' Marathi, Gujarati, or Bengali of Persian and Arabic words.

We may speculate that had Persianized Khari Boli written in a modified Persian script never come into existence, Sanskritized Hindi written in the Nagari script would not have been at the heart of the process of multi-symbol congruence in forming Hindu nationalism in much of North India. Many Persian and Arabic words would have been added to Khari Boli Hindi, as in the case of Bengali, Gujarati and

Marathi. Language and religion, however, would not have formed a mutually reinforcing vicious circle, sharply reinforced by separate scripts with all their social and religious connotations. This does not mean that no Hindu or Muslim nationalisms would have arisen, but rather that their forms would have been much different.

Elsewhere in India, the replacement of Persian meant a real change: a return to regional vernaculars and the introduction of English, although there was some initial resistance in Bengal. In much of north India, however, the forces of continuity proved overwhelming for most of the nineteenth century, especially in UP where Urdu in Urdu script was hardly different from Persian in Persian script. Although there were one or two exceptions—Kumaun district in UP, where practically no Muslims lived, and for a while the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories in central India—on the whole Urdu had half a century to become established and thereby make exceptionally difficult any attempt to oust it.

Let us also ask ourselves how things might have turned out if far fewer Muslims had lived in the UP. Since British language policy seemed to bear a direct relation to the numbers and the influence of the Muslim population, the Hindi movement in the UP might have succeeded much more quickly—as in the cases of Bihar and the Central Provinces—and the uncompromising attitudes engendered in the long-drawn-out struggle might never have appeared. The relationship of Hindi to the rest of India might have turned out quite differently, and cries of 'Hindi imperialism' might never have been heard.

Let us further speculate what might have happened if the government of the UP had encouraged only Urdu at the elementary and secondary levels, or if it had supported the Kaithi script instead of the Nagari. Certainly the mobilization and differentiation of the Hindi elite would have taken a very different form. Perhaps the Kaithi would have become a script of equal importance to the Urdu. Perhaps the mobilization brought about through the educational system would have been greatly delayed. Or perhaps, judging by the attitudes of Ballantyne's students in the 1840s towards the prospect of 'Hindi' being absorbed into Urdu, the Hindi movement might never have come about, and Khari Boli Hindi might have become just another literary dialect.

Let us speculate still further on what the consequences might have been had the Hindi movement chosen Braj Bhasha instead of Khari Boli. Since Braj was much less widespread than Khari Boli in its Urdu form, the movement might have been confined to a much smaller area.

Braj was, after all, more refined than Khari Boli, closer to Sanskrit in poetic forms. If the Hindi movement had been interested only in *shuddhī* it should have chosen Braj as a much more suitable candidate than Khari Boli. But the Hindi movement chose instead to 'recapture' Khari Boli from Urdu, as it were; to make a more widespread candidate purer rather than make a purer candidate more widespread.

In essence, the mainstream Hindi movement in the UP and eventually in India could never accommodate a rival. Its whole existence was based on the superiority of Hindi and its inseparable connection with Hinduism, and on the idea that Hindi was irrevocably different from Urdu. No spirit of compromise, of adjustment, of partial assimilation to the benefit of both Hindi and Urdu came to the fore. Rather, the movement was based on a spirit of win or lose, of no compromise, of the complete differentiation of Hindi from Urdu, or of the complete assimilation of Urdu to Hindi. Urdu had no right to exist in India, and was a usurper of Hindi's rightful place, just as Muslims had no right to exist in India, and were usurpers of Hindus' rightful place. A common script *might* have made a big difference; such highly dissimilar scripts as the Urdu and the Nagari stacked the cards towards extreme differentiation. Nevertheless, some sort of synthesis was not impossible: this had already been achieved in the common basis of Hindi and Urdu, and the two scripts did not pose an impossible obstacle, as Gandhiji's two-script solution, or the UP government-sponsored Hindustani Academy indicated. Such voices of moderation or compromise were drowned out, however, and could accomplish little in the face of far more powerful rivals.

What occurred reminds me a good deal of what the American anthropologist Gregory Bateson called schismogenesis, i.e., a pattern of events in which two or more variables mutually amplify their differences in a vicious spiral of increasing intensity until the whole situation explodes, collapses, or falls apart. The very tendency to think in opposites, i.e., Hindi vs. Urdu, Hindu vs. Muslim, Nagari vs. Urdu, tended to influence the outcome by simplifying and polarizing a complex situation. Those who continually strove for differentiation—linguistic, religious and political—helped to create a self-fulfilling prophecy. The very differences they magnified justified the drastic solution of partition which they proposed, and the very proposal of this solution helped to magnify the differences.

In conclusion, let me turn to the theme of Hindi becoming a world language. Certainly the numbers are there, and certainly the wish is there: I still remember the excitement among the audience at the First World Hindi Convention in Nagpur in early 1975 when the Soviet delegates announced that they supported a resolution for Hindi to become the seventh official language of the United Nations. In my opinion, however, the proper attitudes are not widespread enough, and the heritage of the struggle between Hindi and Urdu is partly responsible.

If Hindi supporters wish their language to become a world language, let them imitate the spirit of English, which became a great language by *inclusion* rather than *exclusion*. Let them cultivate an open and accepting attitude towards borrowing words from other sources, including Arabic and Persian, and let them allow and encourage this process—though likely to happen anyway since language change lies mainly beyond the powers of a few to control. But if Hindi supporters wish to move in this direction, they must give up the narrow inheritance of the nineteenth century provincial struggle and its influence on the subsequent twentieth century national struggle; they must adopt a broader and more open outlook. Let them abandon *shuddhta* and welcome diversity, let them give up parochialism and welcome enrichment from many sources, indigenous and foreign.

Despite the picture of enormous and unbridgeable differences between various divisions of her population so many writers delight in giving us, India has also proved many times over that unity in diversity can be realized, that assimilation and differentiation can coexist, and that a real synthesis can take place.

NOTES

1. Shri Radha Krishna Das, 'Hindi-Urdu', *Saraswatī* (Allahabad), III, 11 (November 1902), 359.
2. This phrase, I believe, was first coined by the late S. K. Chatterjee.
3. I do not mean to suggest that only language and religion played important roles in the partition of British India, but rather to suggest that these had pre-eminent roles and that they as well as other influences affected each other in such a way as to mutually amplify rather than reduce, to intensify rather than diminish, the destructive downward spiral of mutual hatred and contempt among many Indians.
4. In the same vein, one can note the irony of the fact that the Nagari Pracharini Sabha itself, while trying to establish Nagari writers and to write its own legal

dictionary on a Hindi-Sanskrit basis, still used the Urdu term *muharrir* for the court writers it wanted to recruit.

5. For example, neither the sound nor the symbol of the retroflex nasal can be represented in the Urdu script.
6. For example, the three different spellings for the sibilant 's' cannot be represented in Nagari.
7. For example, R. S. Kaushala, *New Roman Urdu Primer*, 5th edition, (Ambala: 1942); P. J. Griffiths, *Shahron Ka Sudhar: Hindustan Ke Shahron Ke Sudhar Par Ek Nazar* (Allahabad: 194?); R. S. Kaushala, *Āzād Hindustan Ke Sūrma* (Ambala: 1949 [?]). The two titles in Roman Urdu are cited just as written; the first title uses no diacriticals, though some diacriticals appear in the main text.
8. Throughout the history of the Hindi movement, supporters of Nagari have often claimed special virtues for their script. One of the greatest of these virtues, we are told, is the scientific nature of the Nagari alphabet. Certainly the order of the letters of the alphabet (though not unique to Nagari or Hindi) justifies this claim: the individual sounds follow a carefully conceived sequence based on an analysis of articulatory phonetics already ancient when Europeans first encountered India. But the particular *shapes* of the letters display no special virtues, and some of the them—*dh* and *gh*, *m* and *bh*—are easily confused on the average Hindi typewriter. Moreover, the necessity for 'dead' keys to add superscripts, subscripts, etc. on the Hindi typewriter makes typing Hindi in Nagari a far more cumbersome process than typing Hindi in the Roman script. To confound the two very different issues of alphabetic order and letter shape in one vague word—'scientific'—is to think badly. The Roman script—with the addition of a few diacriticals—proves much better for rapidly typing Hindi, as anyone who has used both scripts knows very well.

Moreover, though much better than English, the pronunciation of Hindi in the Nagari script is *not* totally consistent with spelling. The order of the Urdu alphabet is certainly less scientific and logical than that of Nagari, and the customary practice of leaving out most vowels marks makes pronunciation more difficult. It is only fair to point out, however, that the illogicalities of the alphabetical order of English and of its spelling and pronunciation outweigh those of either Hindi or Urdu; nevertheless, the smaller number of letters in the Roman script makes it much more easily adaptable to typing and word-processing than either the Urdu or Nagari scripts.

9. Film 'Hindi' has become more and more hybridized over the years with the addition of words and phrases from Marathi, Gujarati, and other languages, including English.
10. Amrit Rai, *A House Divided: The Origin and Development of Hindi/Hindavi* (Delhi, 1984). See especially Chapter 5, 'The Cultural Divide'.
11. On the whole, during our period Muslims were much less interested in any assimilation to Hindi, than Hindus were to Urdu. This lack of symmetry was mirrored in the membership of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha, which never had more than a tiny handful of Muslim members, and in statistics gathered by Sir Antony MacDonnell after the 1900 decision giving equal status to Hindi and Urdu. Yet there were a few Muslims interested in Hindi and willing to support

it: in 1940 the Sabha published a book in Urdu entitled *Mulk Kī Zabān aur Fāzil Musalmān* [*The Language of the Country and Learned Muslims*] which contained statements by several Muslim scholars in favour of Hindi.

12. See the section of Chapter V entitled 'The Hindi-Urdu Controversy of the 1860s and 1870s'.
13. Sohan Prasad, *Hindī aur Urdū Kī Laṛāī* (Gorakhpur: 1886), stanzas 280 and 281.
14. The statistics may suggest more Hindi than was the case because we are not sure about the nature of the *language* of the materials written in the Nagari script. Highly Persianized Khari Boli could be, and was written in the Nagari script, as J. C. Lyall noted in 1900 of the court language in the Central Provinces. (See the section of Chapter V entitled 'The Persianization of Urdu'.)
15. See the section of Chapter III entitled 'The Kaithi Script', and the sections of Chapter V entitled 'The 1900 Decision: The Machinery of Deliberation', and 'Epilogue'.
16. See the section of Chapter V entitled 'The Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras'.
17. See the opening part of the section of Chapter III entitled 'An Analysis of Language Policy' where F. S. Growse explains some of the reasons of the preference of his countrymen for Urdu.

Appendix

Sources

The Hindi movement has generated a considerable literature in many different forms: pamphlets, petitions, government administrative reports, newspaper articles, census reports, histories of literature, dictionaries, journal articles, dramas, poems, autobiographies, scholarly monographs, and organizational histories and reports. This mass of information, embodied largely in English, Hindi and Urdu, typically reflects the biases engendered in the long course of the movement, and dispassionate analyses by contemporary observers are the exception. To a large extent the language of the source indicates the bias: Hindi sources usually reflect a pro-Hindi and Urdu sources a pro-Urdu viewpoint, while English sources contain a whole range of outlooks. Even supposedly neutral sources, such as census reports, did not escape the distorting effects of strongly-held attitudes towards language and script.

Therefore, *The Census of India*, prima facie one of the most valuable sources, has limited worth. The history of those sections dealing with language in the United Provinces, the storm centre of the Hindi movement, shows clearly how bias and inexact terminology rendered linguistic data almost useless. The Census of 1881, the first to include a section on language, made some attempt to estimate speakers of various dialects on the very rough basis of the administrative divisions of the province. The enumerators were instructed to use the term 'Hindustani' for the vernacular, however, thus allowing no accurate estimate of the numbers of speakers of either the regional standards or Hindi vis-a-vis Urdu. Moreover, this census did not recognize the separate existence of Khari Boli as a vernacular dialect, but included it under Braj Bhasha. The Census of 1891, like its predecessor, used language figures gathered by enumerators instructed to use the term 'Hindustani'. The term 'Khari Boli' first appears in this census which made a more exact attempt to estimate the numbers of speakers of various dialects. No mention of the Hindi-Urdu controversy occurred in either census, though both clearly recognized Hindi and Urdu as two separate literary standards.

In contrast, both the Census of 1901 and that of 1911 gave considerable attention to the Hindi-Urdu controversy, and both attempted to collect statistics on the numbers of Hindi and Urdu speakers. Although the two censuses drew on the preliminary results of Dr George Grierson's

Linguistic Survey of India for their linguistic analysis of the provincial dialects, they failed by their own admission to present an accurate picture of the linguistic situation. The strong biases of the enumerators and of an influential portion of the public for or against Hindi and Urdu vitiated the language figures in both years. As a result the Census of 1921 returned to the nineteenth century policy of lumping speakers of Hindi and Urdu under the single category of 'Hindustani'. The two following censuses continued this policy.

The viewpoint of Hindi supporters appears in a number of sources, both English and Hindi. One of the most important English sources, Madan Mohan Malaviya's *Court Character and Primary Education in N.-W. P. and Oudh*, though putting forth a fundamentally flawed argument, has value not only for insights into the thinking of Hindi partisans, but also for extensive quotations from earlier and contemporary sources and for extensive statistics.¹ Another document by a champion of Hindi, Raja Shiva Prasad's *Memorandum: Court Characters, in the Upper Provinces of India*, has particular importance as one of the very first statements explicitly attacking Urdu and defending Hindi as respective symbols of Muslim and Hindu culture.² One of the most invaluable Hindi sources, in addition to the official reports and publications of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras, was *Merī Ātmakahānī*, the autobiography of one of the Sabha's three founders, Shyam Sundar Das.³ No other source gives such an intimate picture of the activities of the most important Hindi organization of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and of the motivations and thoughts of a leading advocate of Hindi and the Nagari script.

An especially valuable English source, the *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers* beginning in 1868 and continuing until 1937, samples a wide range of Indian opinion from both Hindi and Urdu advocates, and furnishes many useful clues about language attitudes and policies not available elsewhere. The coverage of this source, unfortunately, displays considerable inconsistency due to successive officials having different principles of selection. Another indispensable English source, the series of annual education reports for the North-Western Provinces beginning in 1843 and continuing right up to independence, provides not only detailed information on British language and educational policy and Indian reactions, but also essential data on the social backgrounds and language preferences of students in both government and indigenous schools.

The most important English work presenting the viewpoint of Urdu

partisans was *A Defence of the Urdu Language and Character*, published under the auspices of the Urdu Defence Association of Allahabad.⁴ This work, an extended and well-written reply to Malaviya's *Court Character*, gives a thorough account of the arguments against Hindi and Nagari and puts the best face possible on any shortcomings of Urdu and the Urdu script. The contemptuous attitude of Urdu supporters towards their opponents emerges all too clearly. An Urdu source, *Panja Sāla Tārīkh-e-Anjumān Taraqqī-e-Urdū*, has particular usefulness for describing the early years of the Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu (Society for the Progress of Urdu), which became India's most important Urdu organization.⁵ The author's spleen against Sir Antony MacDonnell, who promulgated the orders recognizing Hindi and Nagari in 1900, however, mars his account of events.

One of the dangers lying in wait for the unwary researcher in most of the sources, including those discussed above, comes from the considerable confusion concerning the meaning of several crucial terms, especially 'Hindi' and 'Hindustani'. 'Hindi' has at least four distinct meanings, some of which we have already encountered. First, writers have used the term for several centuries to denote all the spoken dialects of the Hindi regional area, i.e., Braj Bhasha, Avadhi, Bhojpuri, Khari Boli, and other regional standards as well as village dialects. 'Hindi in this sense appears frequently in general discussion of India's major languages. Second, 'Hindi' can refer to 'Hindi-heritage literature', i.e., the literary traditions of regional standards such as Braj Bhasha and Avadhi. This usage occurs frequently in histories of Hindi literature and the polemical writings of Hindi publicists. These same writings often use the term in a third sense to mean 'high Hindi', i.e., highly Sanskritized Khari Boli Hindi. A fourth usage, the vaguest of the lot, implies simply 'that which is not Urdu'. This usage appears in many sources, especially in the vernacular press during the Hindi-Urdu controversy of the nineteenth century. 'Hindustani' has two distinct meanings: this term can refer either to Urdu or to a style of Khari Boli which uses the Nagari or the Urdu script and avoids excess use of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian words. British writers often use the first sense, while some Indian writers, notably Mahatma Gandhi, use the second.

The confusion and ambiguity apparent in much of the literature stems not only from the distortions of partisanship but also from the inaccurate observations of amateur linguists. As the 1901 Census stated, Grierson's *Linguistic Survey of India* had conclusively shown 'the unscientific nature of the old classifications of the languages and dialects of

the N.-W. Provinces and Oudh [the United Provinces] both according to native ideas and also those of European students who had not the extensive materials now available'.⁶ Modern linguistics did not appear until the early nineteenth century, and trained linguists did not exist in significant numbers until the twentieth. To unravel the tangled skein of evidence, then, becomes a difficult though not impossible task, requiring careful usage of terms and a constant awareness of the bias of the sources.

NOTES

1. Madan Mohan Malaviya, *Court Character and Primary Education in N.-W. P. and Oudh* (Allahabad, 1897). See the section of Chapter V entitled 'The Hindi-Nagari Campaign of 1895-1900' for an extended discussion of this work.
2. Shiva Prasad, *Memorandum: Court Characters, in the Upper Provinces of India* (Banaras, 1868), located in the library of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha, Banaras. See the section of Chapter V entitled 'The Hindi-Urdu Controversy of the 1860s and 1870s' for an analysis of this work.
3. Shyam Sundar Das, *Merī Ātmakāhāni* (Prayāg, 1957).
4. M. Rahmat-Ullah, *A Defence of the Urdu Language and Character. (Being a reply to the pamphlet called 'Court Character and Primary Education in N.-W. P. and Oudh')* (Allahabad, 1900). See the section of Chapter V entitled 'The Aftermath of the 1900 Decision' for a discussion of this work.
5. Sayyed Hashmi Faridabadi, *Panja Sāla Tārīkh-e-Anjumān Taraqqī-e-Urdū* (Karachi, 1953).
6. *Census of India, 1901, Volume XVI, Part I*, pp. 174-5.

Glossary

Geographical, Administrative, and Linguistic Terms

Anjumān-e-Taraqī-e-Urdū: Society for the Progress of Urdu. Founded in 1903 as an offshoot of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental Educational Conference. Under the leadership of Maulvi Abdul Haq, the Anjuman became India's and later Pakistan's chief organization for the promotion of Urdu.

Arabic script: A cursive script used for writing most Islamic languages, in which vowels are often not represented and consonants assume different shapes depending on their position in the word. The Persian and Urdu scripts include all the Arabic letters and some additional letters not in the Arabic script. Additionally, the distinctions between certain sounds represented by Arabic letters have been lost in Persian and Urdu.

Avadhi: One of the regional standards of Uttar Pradesh, related to but not identical with Khari Boli Hindi. Spoken mainly in the area of Uttar Pradesh formerly known as Oudh. An important literary language in earlier times; used by the famous medieval poet Tulsidas for the *Rāmcharitmānas*, a recasting of the Sanskrit epic the *Rāmāyana*.

Bhojpuri: Another regional standard. Spoken in eastern Uttar Pradesh and western Bihar, and related to but not identical with Khari Boli Hindi. Listed as a separate language in the 1971 Census of India.

Braj Bhasha: Another regional standard. Spoken in south-western Uttar Pradesh, and closely related to but not identical with Khari Boli Hindi. An important literary language in earlier times and well into the twentieth century.

Dāstān: A Persian literary form incorporated into the Urdu literary tradition; prose romance of magic, love, and adventure.

Devanagari: A synonym for the Nagari script.

Hindi: An often carelessly-used term with several meanings:

(1) Writers have used the term for several centuries to denote all the spoken dialects of the Hindi regional area, i.e., Braj Bhasha, Avadhi, Bhojpuri, Khari Boli, and other regional standards as well as village dialects.

(2) Others use 'Hindi' to refer to 'Hindi-heritage literature', i.e., the literary traditions of regional standards such as Braj Bhasha and Avadhi.

This usage occurs frequently in histories of Hindi literature and the polemical writings of Hindi publicists.

(3) Still others, especially Hindi partisans, use the term to mean 'high Hindi', i.e., highly Sanskritized Khari Boli Hindi.

(4) Others, the vaguest of the lot, use the term to indicate simply 'that which is not Urdu'. This usage appears in many sources, especially in the vernacular press during the Hindi-Urdu controversy of the nineteenth century.

Hindi-Urdu: A term used by some linguists (e.g., Kelkar and Gumperz) to refer to the linguistic continuum formed by these two divisions of Khari Boli. This usage specifically recognizes the practically identical grammars and the large amount of shared vocabulary.

Hindi Sahitya Sammelan: The Society for Hindi Literature. Founded in 1910. Despite its literary name, the Sammelan became the major political force behind the promotion of Hindi and the Nagari script. Some of India's major political figures—e.g., Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Rajendra Prasad—were members at one time or another.

Hindustani: This term has two distinct meanings:

(1) Urdu.

(2) A style of Khari Boli which uses the Nagari or the Urdu script and avoids excessive use of difficult Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian words. British writers often use the first sense, while some Indian writers, notably Mahatma Gandhi, use the second.

Hindustani Academy: Founded in 1927 with the official sponsorship of the provincial government. Kayasth literary figures have played an important role in its leadership.

Hunter (Indian Education) Commission: This body, appointed to investigate the educational situation in British India, became in 1882 the centre of an intense language controversy in the Punjab and in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

Kaithi: The most important of several different cursive versions of the Nagari script. Widely used in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by Hindu merchant and trading castes in the NWP&O and Bihar, and also by *patwārīs* (village record keepers) in Oudh, the eastern NWP, and in western Bihar. For several decades, Kaithi became one of the official scripts of Bihar.

Khari Bolī: A regional standard of Uttar Pradesh which for various historical reasons became the common grammatical basis of both Hindi and Urdu. Khari Boli Hindi uses the Nagari script and looks to Sanskrit for its higher vocabulary, while the Urdu form of Khari Boli uses the Urdu script (a modified version of the Arabic and Persian scripts) and draws on Arabic and Persian for its higher vocabulary.

Kumaun: A division (group of districts) in the mountainous area of the northwestern NWP&O. The Nagari script was used here from the beginning of British rule in the area.

Mahājānī: One of several cursive varieties of Nagari associated with Hindu merchant and trading castes.

Maithili: A regional standard of Bihar sometimes lumped under the category of Hindi in the past, but listed as a separate language in the 1971 Census of India. According to some, more closely related to Bengali than to Hindi.

Mūḍriyā or Muṇḍā: Another of the several cursive varieties of Nagari associated with Hindu merchant and trading castes.

Nagari: A term with two distinct meanings:

(1) The syllabic script (in which vowels are always indicated, unlike the Urdu script, but are still subordinate to consonants) used for centuries for Sanskrit and earlier Hindi regional standards, as well as modern Khari Boli Hindi and Marathi. Relatives of the Nagari script are used for several other major north Indian languages.

(2) The script *and* Khari Boli Hindi as in 'Nagari Pracharini Sabha' in which 'Nagari' refers to both script and language.

Nagari Pracharini Sabha: Society for the Promotion of Nagari. Founded in 1893, and still in existence, this was the premier Hindi organization of the NWP&O and of India during the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. The Sabha soon became a primarily literary rather than political body.

North-Western Provinces: A province of British India from 1836 to 1856 whose boundaries fluctuated somewhat, but roughly included all of modern Uttar Pradesh with the exception of Oudh.

North-Western Provinces and Oudh: The predecessor of the United Provinces. Consisted in the North-Western Provinces with the addition of Oudh in 1856; the two were amalgamated in 1877.

Oudh: Formerly a Muslim kingdom, Oudh came under British control in 1856 as a Chief Commissionership, subject to the authority of the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces. In 1877 the two jurisdictions were amalgamated, and the Lieutenant-Governorship and the Chief Commissionership were held by one person. In 1902 the North-Western Provinces and Oudh became the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh and kept this name until 1947, when the area became the state of Uttar Pradesh.

Patwārī: A village record keeper, responsible for various kinds of annual reports.

Persian: The major language of administration in north India for several centuries. Closely associated with Muslim rule, both the Mughal dynasty and its predecessors. Used in British India into the 1830s.

Persian script: A modified version of the Arabic script, adding several letters not in Arabic, but losing some of the distinctions in pronunciation represented by certain Arabic letters.

Regional standard: Regional standards are subdivisions of more major languages, and occur in relatively homogeneous forms over large areas. In Bihar three such standards, formerly included under the category of Hindi, exist: Maithili, Magahi and Bhojpuri. In Uttar Pradesh, four have importance: Bhojpuri in the eastern, Avadhi in the central, Braj Bhasha in the southwestern, and Khari Boli in the northwestern districts. Each of these has large numbers of speakers: the 1901 Census, the last to list such figures for each standard, showed that they included about 95 per cent of the population of the province.

Some of these languages—Maithili, Avadhi, Braj Bhasha, and Khari Boli—have literary traditions of several centuries, while others—Bhojpuri and Magahi—have rich oral folk literatures. Similar regional standards exist in other parts of the Hindi area. Villagers use these to talk with merchants in nearby trading centres and with villagers from other areas. Small town residents use them as their mother tongue, while both educated and uneducated city dwellers use them at home or among friends.

Sarāfī: Another cursive variety of the Nagari script associated with Hindu merchant and trading castes. Also, a synonym for *mahājanī* and *munḍā*.

Saugor and Nerbudda Territories: (From the town of Sagar and the River

Narmada.) A hilly area in central India, formerly administered by the NWP&O which became part of the Central Provinces and is now divided between the states of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

Shikasta: Literally, 'broken'. An abbreviated or shorthand form of the Persian script and Urdu scripts used by officials to keep records, and notorious for its extreme illegibility.

Tahsīl: A revenue subdivision of a district in British India.

United Provinces: In full, the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. The official name for the North-Western Provinces and Oudh after 1902. The United Provinces became the state of Uttar Pradesh in 1947.

Urdu: The form of Khari Boli which uses the Urdu script, borrows much of its higher vocabulary from Persian and Arabic, and has strong associations with the Muslim community. Urdu became one of the two official languages of Pakistan, along with English, and very recently (1989) an additional official language in Uttar Pradesh.

Urdu script: A modified version of the Persian script. The Urdu script has added some letters and sounds, the retroflex series, which do not exist in Persian or Arabic, but are common to most major north and south Indian languages. Like the Persian script, it has lost some of the distinctions in pronunciation represented by certain Arabic letters.

Uttar Pradesh: Literally, 'the state of the north'. The successor to the United Provinces.

Theoretical Terms

Assimilation: A process of change which brings different peoples or ethnic groups within the same political system into the same network of social communication. The rate of assimilation must keep ahead of that of social mobilization, if differentiation is not to result.

Community: This term refers to an ethnic group whose members have developed an awareness of their common identity and seek to define group boundaries.

Differentiation: This process, the opposite to assimilation, separates peoples or ethnic groups into different networks of social communication. When the rate of social mobilization outstrips the rate of assimilation, differentiation takes place.

Ethnic Group: This term, defined as any group of individuals with some objective characteristics in common, also refers to groups whose members do not necessarily give any subjective importance to their objective distinctness.

Multi-Symbol Congruence: This term refers to the process by which political elites choose one symbol as primary and strive to bring other symbols into line.

Nationality: This term refers to a community which makes political demands with a significant degree of success.

Objective Characteristic: This refers to such things as language, culture, territory, diet, dress, etc. rather than to any role in a societal division of labour.

Social Mobilization: This is a process of change occurring in areas undergoing modernization, which brings increasing numbers of the more isolated portions of the population into an ever denser 'net of social communication'. This 'mobilized population' includes literates, newspaper readers, people residing in cities and towns, people in non-agricultural occupations, and others.

Note: For a brief discussion of the categories of sounds (retroflex or cerebral, guttural, palatal, dental, labial, etc.) the reader may refer to any standard grammar such as Snell and Weightman's *Teach Yourself Hindi*.

Abbreviations

Bengal Quarterly Pubs Rpt: Statement of Particulars Regarding Books and Periodicals Published in Bengal . . .

Bengal Gen Progs Misc: Proceedings of the Government of Bengal in the General Department (Miscellaneous)

CP Admin Rpt: Report on the Administration of the Central Provinces

CP Home Progs: Central Provinces Home Proceedings (General)

Educ Comm Rpt: Report of the Indian Education Commission (Calcutta, 1883)

Educ Comm Rpt Bengal: Education Commission: Report by the Bengal Provincial Committee (Calcutta, 1884)

Educ Comm Rpt CP: Education Commission: Report by the Central Provinces Provincial Committee (Calcutta, 1884)

Educ Comm Rpt NWP&O: Education Commission: Report by the North-Western Provinces and Oudh Provincial Committee (Calcutta, 1884)

NPS Ann Rpt: Nagari Pracharini Sabha Kashi: Varṣik Vivaraṇ (Annual Report)

NWP: North-Western Provinces

NWP Educ Rpt: Report on the State of Popular Education in the North-Western Provinces

NWP Gen Dept Progs: Proceedings of the Government of the N.-W. Provinces in the General and Educational Department

NWP SVN: Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers Published in the Panjab, North-Western Provinces . . .

NWP&O: North-Western Provinces and Oudh

NWP&O Gen Admin Progs: Proceedings of the Government of the N.-W. Provinces and Oudh in the General Administration Department

NWP&O Quarterly Pubs Rpt: Statement of Particulars Regarding Books and Periodicals Published in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh . . .

NWP&O SVN: Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers Published in the Panjab, North-Western Provinces and Oudh . . .

SRGI: Selections from the Records of the Government of India . . .

UP: United Provinces of Agra and Oudh; Uttar Pradesh

UP Admin Rpt: United Provinces of Agra and Oudh Administration Report

UP Educ Progs: Proceedings of the Government of the United Provinces in the Educational Department

UP Quarterly Pubs Rpt: Statement of Particulars Regarding Books and Periodicals Published in the United Provinces . . .

UP SVN: Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers Published in the United Provinces . . .

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ONE LANGUAGE, TWO SCRIPTS

Christopher R. King

The Hindi movement in nineteenth century north India provides a fine example of the relationships between language, religion and nationalism. This study not only examines the political, but also the social and cultural aspects of the Hindi movement, particularly on the local and provincial levels. It is based on an extensive use of both Hindi and English sources and includes a thorough search of official records such as education reports and publication statistics.

The book provides the theoretical, historical, linguistic and social background and traces certain aspects of the history of Hindi and Urdu literature from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century. It assesses the government's language policy and its complex role in shaping the Hindi movement, and analyses both indigenous and government educational systems. The principal thesis of this book is that the Hindi movement of the nineteenth century expressed a Hindu nationalism whose essence lay in the denial of existing assimilation to cultural traditions associated with Muslim rule and the affirmation of potential differentiation from these traditions.

This book fills a gap in our understanding of the role that language has played in the history and politics of modern India and will make interesting reading for historians, linguists, cultural studies scholars as well as general readers.

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'[A] significant contribution in understanding linguistic controversies and their socio-political and economic aspects ... descriptive and well informed.'

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